BUSINESS / B1

OFW remittances breach $10B; October inflows at all-time high of $1.19B

WORLD / A27

Democratic senator in serious condition; control of US Senate hangs in balance

NEWS / A2

Jobless Filipinos down, lowest since January 2000, says Nat'l Statistics Office

SATURDAY SPECIAL / H1

Tyra Banks positions self as Oprah's successor

650 still missing but Bicol rescue called off

By Ephraim Aguilar and Delma Peyra
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—'JELLY BERMUNDO OF BARANgay Padang had been hoping against hope that search and recovery operations would continue, and that she would find her loved ones.

But that faint hope was dashed when the

650 STILL MISSING/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, December 16, 2006 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 9 P18 website: inquirer.net

Trillanes signs up with Friendster, is hacked

By Dona Pazzibugan

FROM REBEL SOLDIER to Friendster?

"Antonio Sonny Trillanes" a.k.a. Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV, the 35-year-old alleged leader of the July 2003 Oakwood

TRILLANES/ A18

BAKA SA SUSUNOD, MYSPACE NAMAN!

Church: We have had it

Cites unresolved issues like Garci tape, fertilizer scam, etc.

SLAM CHACHA
SLAM GLORIA!
PARTIDO NG MANGGAGAWA

NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

FOR THE FIRST TIME, Makati's white-collar and blue-collar workers from Ayala Avenue's ivory towers of business and from the militant labor force in factories, respectively, march together to call the government's attention to their demands for a wage increase, security of tenure instead of wasting time on exertions to amend the Constitution.

By Christian V. Esguerra

AN "ESCALATION OF crises" that the leaders of the country's Roman Catholic Church can no longer take sitting down prompted the Church to spearhead tomorrow's planned huge prayer rally at Manila's Rizal Park.

Top officials of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday rebuffed calls from administration stalwarts for them to abandon the rally at the Quirino Grandstand in the wake of the decision by Ms Arroyo's allies to scrap plans to convene a constituent assembly.

The CBCP secretary general, Msgr. Juanito Figura, said the CBCP could no longer ignore the escalating problems facing the country, including the questions surrounding President Macapagal-Arroyo's disputed victory in the 2004 elections.

Figura specifically cited the "Garci" tapes, which set off the election controversy, the P728-million fertilizer fund scam and the so-called Mayuga report on the alleged involvement of military officials in election fraud as among the issues unresolved to this day.

"The Church cannot play blind, deaf and mute to the sufferings that these issues have brought," Figura said in a press conference.

"There has been an escalating pattern that the Church cannot take sitting down. (It) has to exercise its moral and spiritual leadership, always based on the idea that how people live must also be the life that the Church must live."

Referring to the rally's theme of "watch and pray," Figura said: "Watching does not end with the fact that Con-ass has been archived."

"Watching is still a process which must go on, an open invitation for our citizens to keep on watching for the democracy that they have. (It's) also a reminder for our lawmakers to be aware that the citizens are watching and that prayers will never end."

Until the CBCP announced that it was

CHURCH/ A23

Rally flops in Makati, draws thousands in 3 other cities

By Tarra V. Quismundo, Inquirer Visayas and Inquirer Northern Luzon

THEY WERE ALL AGAINST CHARTER change but only a few hundred protesters showed up in the country's financial center yesterday while thousands took to the streets in Negros, Iloilo and Dagupan City.

The Makati City rally, led by militant workers also demanding higher wages, drew about as many policemen as protesters.

Despite organizers' predictions that they could muster several thousand participants, the number of Makati protesters was only about 300, by INQUIRER estimates. They included a few dozen white-collar workers.

Police estimated their total number at 200.

In contrast, about 1,500 protesters marched in Dagupan and as many as 20,000 Negrenses joined prayer rallies in Negros.

"There was supposed to be 2,000 of us here but you know, they have Christmas parties ... That's our guess," said Jun Umali, president of the National Union of Bank Employees, trying to explain the thin attendance of white collar workers at the Makati protest.

Still, Umali found something significant about it all. He said it was the first time that Makati's business-attired employees took part in a protest action.

Unlike past rallies that had filled the streets around the Ninoy Aquino Monu-

RALLY FLOPS/ A23

2 of 3 Pinoys to vote 'no' to Charter change

TWO OF EVERY THREE FILipinos say they will vote "No" in a plebiscite on a new constitution "that President Macapagal-Arroyo wants" and even among those satisfied with her performance, majority say they will also vote "No," the Social Weather Stations says.

In a press statement yesterday, the polling body said this marked the third consecutive quarter that respondents had said they would vote against the constitution being pushed by Ms Arroyo.

The "No" vote on the Charter

2 OF 3 PINOYS/ A8

POSTPONED SUMMIT

Asean leaders confirm they're coming in Jan.

THE LEADERS OF ALL 10 ASSOciation of Southeast Asian Nations members have confirmed that they will attend the rescheduled 12th Asean Summit of Leaders that will take place in Cebu from Jan. 10 to 15, according to the head of the organizing committee.

Only the leaders of Asean's dialogue partners—China, Japan, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand— have yet to reply, said Marciano Paynor, the chief presidential protocol officer, in a radio interview.

President Macapagal-Arroyo made a dramatic last-minute decision to postpone the event, originally set for Dec. 9 to 13, citing an approaching typhoon.

Officials denied the cancellation came a day after warnings from Britain, the United States, Australia and other nations about a possible terror attack on Cebu. The bad weather eventually spared the central Visayan island.

Paynor said that contrary to speculation in the media and even statements from some foreign dignitaries, the only reason

ASEAN LEADERS/ A18

SMITH IN DETENTION

Salonga to defend Pozon ruling

By Norman Bordadora and Volt Contreras

EXPECT A LEGAL BATTLE OVER the custody of convicted rapist Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith with former Senate President Jovito Salonga coming out of retirement to defend Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon's decision to keep Smith at the Makati City Jail.

Yesterday, the Department of Foreign Affairs through the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) formally asked the Court of Appeals to allow Smith to be returned to US custody pending the disposition of his appeal of his conviction.

The DFA said keeping the US Marine at the Makati City Jail (MCJ) was contrary to the Philippines' "treaty obligations" under the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement, and would have "tremendous repercussions in our diplomatic foreign relations with other

SALONGA/ A17

THE LONG ARM OF THE MAN recorded as the world's tallest reached into the tummies of the dolphins to pluck out the trash.

World's tallest saves 2 dolphins

SHANGHAI—THE WORLD'S tallest man has saved the lives of two dying dolphins in China by reaching deep into their stomachs to pull out pieces of plastic, official Chinese media reported on Thursday.

At an aquarium in the northeastern city of Fushun, doctors failed to remove the plastic with surgical instruments because the pieces were difficult to grasp, Xinhua news agency said. The arms of ordinary people were too short to reach the stomachs.

Bao Xishun, a 2.36 meter (7 foot 9 inch) herdsman who is listed by Guinness World Records as the tallest living man, was therefore summoned from the nearby Chinese region of Inner Mongolia, Xinhua reported.

In an operation shown on local television, a dozen men held the dolphins down while Bao slid his 1.06 meter (42 inch) long arm down their throats to grab the plastic. The dolphins are now re-

WORLD'S/ A18

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers, while Bicol region, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Northeastern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be cloudy skies with rainshowers.
COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/15/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains.
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

LOWEST SINCE JANUARY 2000

Jobless Filipinos down, says NSO

THE COUNTRY'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE slightly dropped to 7.3 percent in October, from 8 percent in July, as 300,000 new jobs were created, mainly in the booming services sector, according to quarterly survey of the the National Statistics Office.

The jobless rate in October was slightly lower than 7.4 percent in October 2005.

The drop was aided by a decline in the overall labor force, which fell to 35.8 million in October from 36.165 million in the previous quarter, according to the NSO's Labor Force Survey for October released yesterday.

"Nevertheless, the better-than-expected labor market figures suggest that income growth and private consumption should hold up," said Frederic Neumann, analyst with the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp., said in a research note.

Using the previous definition of unemployment, which considered two criteria instead of three now, the October unemployment rate was 9.9 percent, at 3.7 million, the lowest since January 2000.

According to the new measure, the unemployment rate was 7.3 percent, and the number of jobless was 2.6 million in October. The employment rate stood at 92.7 percent, which translates to 33.185 million employed Filipinos.

The unemployed, based on the official definition, include all jobless persons at least 15 years of age and are currently available for work and seeking work. The unemployed also include jobless persons who are not seeking for work, either because of temporary illness, expectation of being rehired by past employer, bad weather, or the belief there was no available job at the time of the survey.

Hiring at call centers, telecoms firms and other service industries soaked up job-seekers from the sluggish manufacturing and farming sectors.

"The increase in employment was contributed mainly by the services sector ... The employed persons in the services sector comprised around half (48.6 percent) of the total employed persons," said the NSO.

The NSO noted that the services sector effectively generated 305,000 new jobs. There were 16.1 million persons employed by this sector, against 15.8 million last year.

The agriculture sector, the second largest sector in terms of employment contribution, contributed 36.7 percent of the total employed.

However, the number of employed in agriculture declined to 12.164 million in October, against 12.171 million in the same period last year.

The industry sector generated 12,000 new jobs during the one-year period. From 4.883 million last year, the number of persons employed in the industry sector as of October 2006 slightly rose to 4.895 million.

The NSO said that of the 33.185 million employed Filipinos, those who work full-time, or 40 hours or more a week, stood at 20.5 million, representing 62 percent of the total employed. The number of full-time workers declined from last year's 20.6 million.

On the other hand, those who work part-time, or less than 40 hours a week, comprised 12.2 million of the total employed, or 38 percent. The number of part-time workers increased from last year's 11.8 million.

The underemployment rate also improved, dropping to 20.4 percent from 21.2 percent last year.

The latest underemployment rate translated to 6.8 million Filipinos. This is 201,000 less than the 7 million estimated last year.

The government has vowed to create up to 1.5 million jobs each year up to the end of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term in 2010, but it has not yet met that target.

Around 10 percent of the Philippines' 87 million population work abroad due to a lack of opportunity at home, taking some pressure off the government's jobs target.

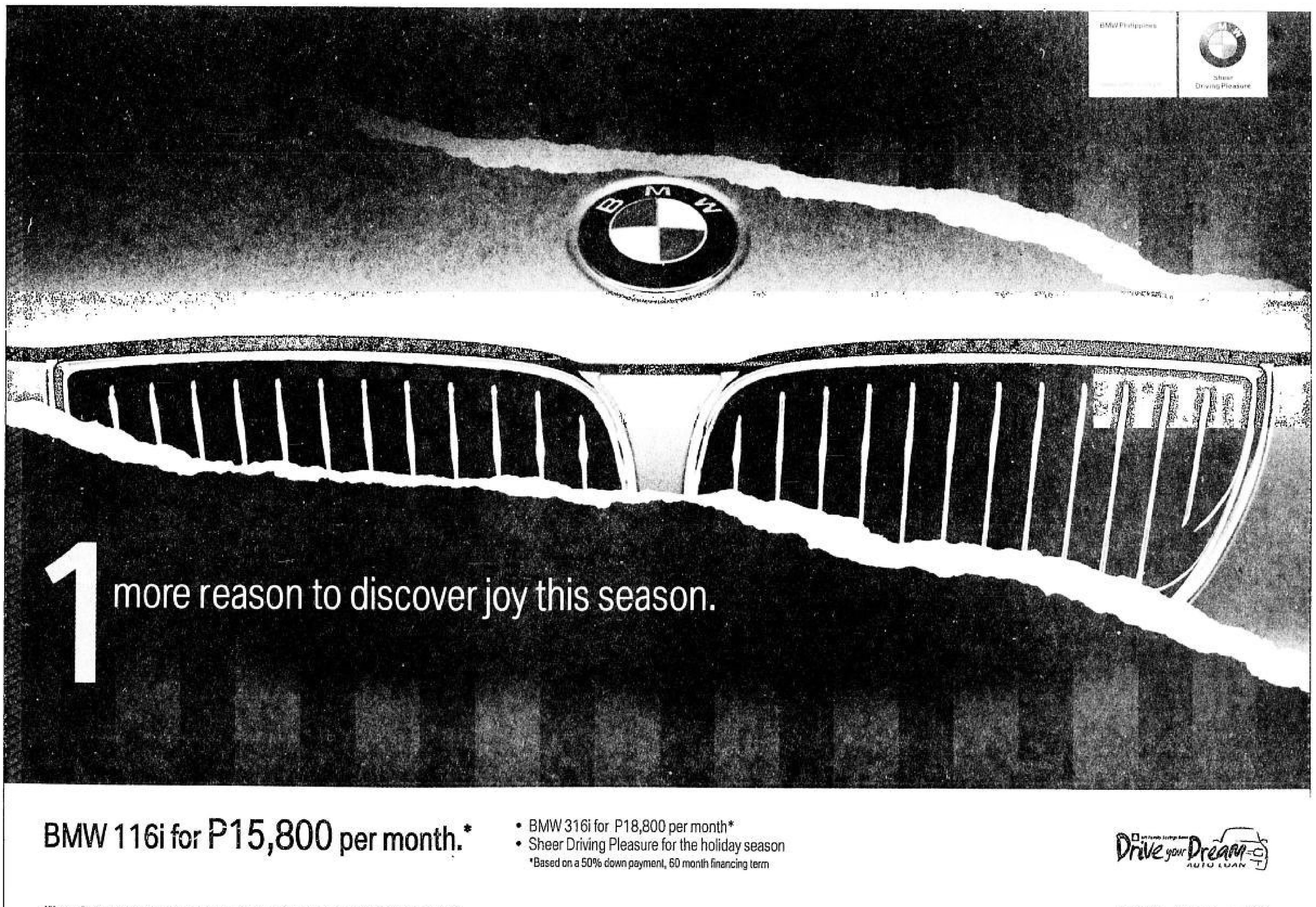
Socio-Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said a lot more has to be done to achieve the government's job-generation goal.

He noted that job generation has also fallen short of the target in past years. Neri said there were only 574,000 jobs created in 2003; 977,000 in 2004; and 700,000 in 2005.

Among the programs that he recommends to attain the job-creation goals are: boosting agribusiness by developing two million hectares of agricultural land, increasing the government's spending for infrastructure, tourism promotion. *Reuters and Michelle V. Remo*

WORKERS UNITE, SLAM CHACHA
PARTIDO NG MANGGAGAWA

ANTI-CHACHA RALLY
Makati employees joined militant workers in rejecting the temporary archiving of the House majority's Con-ass resolution and pushed for its categorical withdrawal in a rally yesterday along Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. NINO JESUS ORBETA



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3 suspected bank robbers shot dead in Cavite shootout

By Alcuin Papa

THREE SUSPECTED BANK ROBBERS IN police uniforms were killed in a shootout with operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Molino, Bacoor, Cavite, at noon yesterday.

One of the three suspects was identified as Jake Mahilom, the alleged leader of the group.

Initial reports reaching Camp Crame said the three suspects were members of the notorious Ampang-Laxamana Ilonggo bank robbery gang.

Sr. Supt. Benjie Delos Santos said the encounter occurred near a commercial complex in Molino, Bacoor, Cavite, just as the heavily armed suspects who were wearing police uniforms were about to rob one of the establishments.

The suspects on board a white car were flagged down by the CIDG operatives who had been tailing the suspects for the past few days after receiving reports that the suspects would rob an unidentified establishment.

However, the suspects fired on the policemen who returned fire, killing on the spot two of the suspects.

The remaining suspects tried to elude the pursuing policemen. This led to a car chase which ended in a wet market. Mahilom was seriously injured in the exchange of gunfire and was later taken to Metro South Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Delos Santos said pursuit operations were still ongoing for two other suspects who managed to escape.

Police said the Ampang-Laxamana group was a spin-off from the Ilonggo kidnap-for-ransom group.

The group is believed responsible for a series of robberies, holdup incidents and kidnappings in Metro Manila and Region 4.

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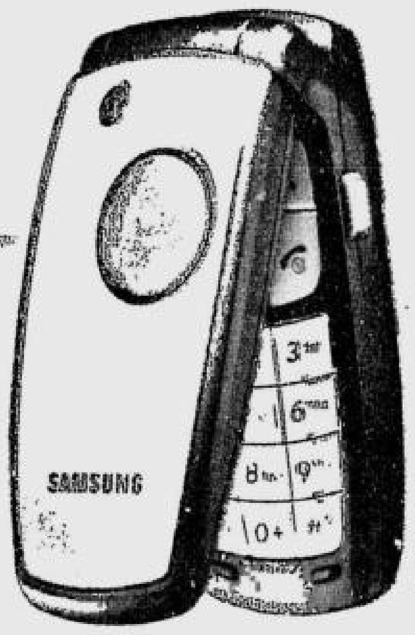

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Asiad medalists arrive in Manila to a low-key welcome

By Nikko Dizon

TRIUMPHANT FILIPINO ATHletes in the Asian Games, led by the boxing and billiards sensations who won gold medals, arrived in Manila yesterday afternoon and eagerly shared their victory with their countrymen.

But their arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) was low key, compared to the lusty welcome that ring sensation Manny Pacquiao always receive after his bouts abroad.

Nevertheless, the athletes' pride of being able to wear the shining medals around their necks for their countrymen to see was unmistakable.

In separate interviews, the Asiad medalists said their success was for their country and they were grateful to the support of their fellow Filipinos.

"Their cheering gave us a high morale during our fights. And their voices, their screams made us stronger even when we were already tired," boxer Godfrey Castro, who won a bronze medal, told reporters in Filipino.

Castro said that even if the athletes were unaware of the political storm happening in the Philippines while they were competing in Doha, he hoped that their medal harvest in the 15th Asian Games would hopefully unite the country.

Antonio Gabica, a gold medalist in billiards, said it was an inspiration to see fellow Filipinos working in Doha who took the time to watch them compete and give their support.

Bantamweight Joan Tipon, who also bagged a gold, said he focused on winning and trained hard to achieve his victory.

Billiards silver medalist, Jeffrey de Luna, said his match with Gabica in the finals did not turn out into a competition between two players.

"*Masaya na kami. Naglaro-laro na lang kami kasi wala nang kawala ang* gold and silver. *Kahit sino sa amin manalo ng* gold (We were already happy. We just played because the gold and silver were already in the bag regardless of who between us will win)," De Luna said.

He added that neither him nor Gabica thought of beating one another in the game for the personal glory of winning the gold.

"*Hindi na pansarili. Inisip namin na para sa Pilipinas ito. Hindi para sa amin lang*," (It was no longer for personal honor. It was for the Philippines and not for ourselves only), De Luna said.

Manuel Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (ABAP), said the Filipino boxers' triumph in Doha bodes well for their chances of winning in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

"History would (show) that the performance (in) the Asian Games is a revelation of what would be the outcome of the coming Olympics," Lopez said.

He cited the case of boxer Onyok Velasco who won the gold in the 1994 Hiroshima Asiad and went on to win a silver in the Olympics.

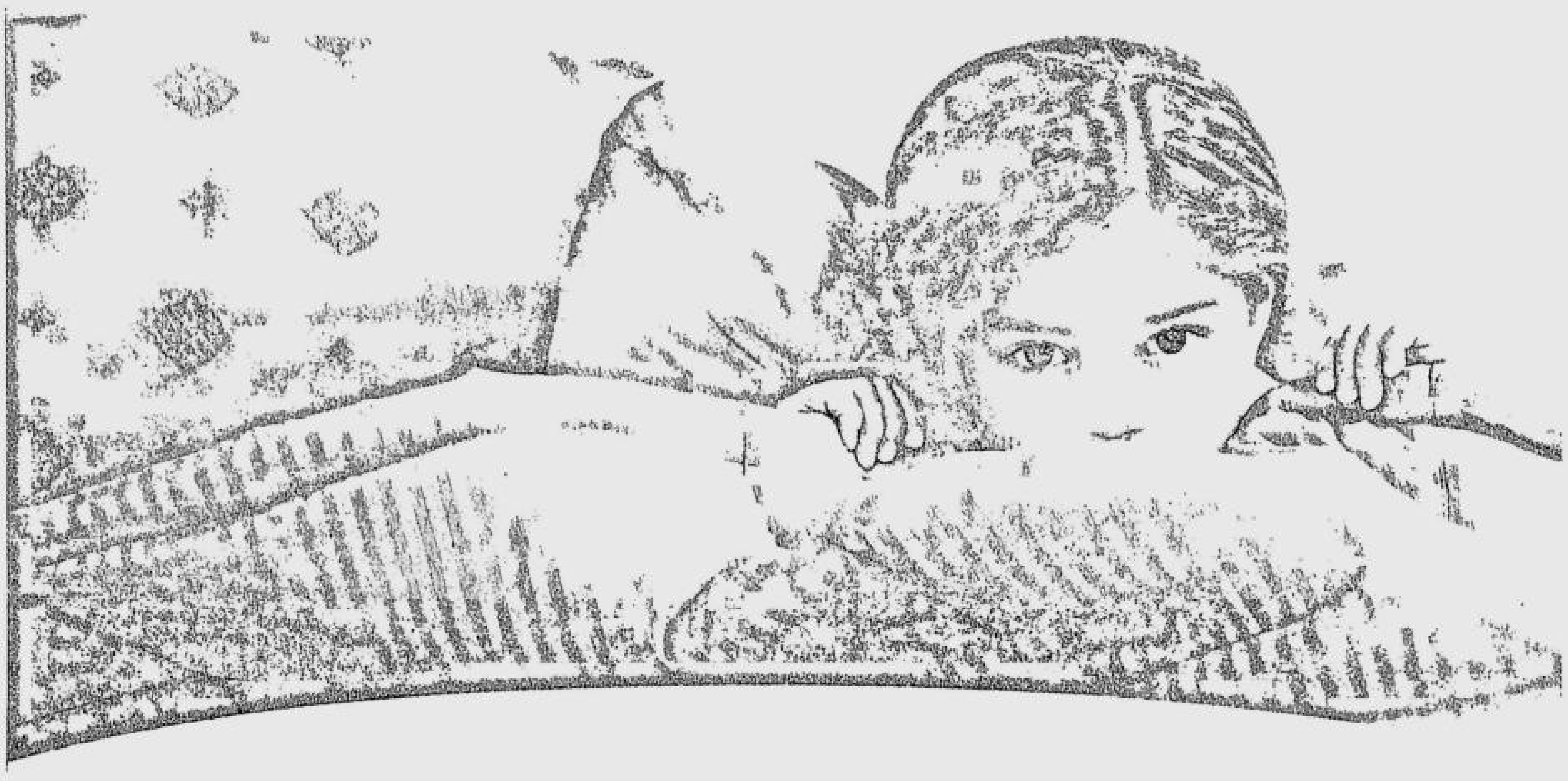
"We believe that given the right assistance and proper training we will get a gold medal," Lopez said.

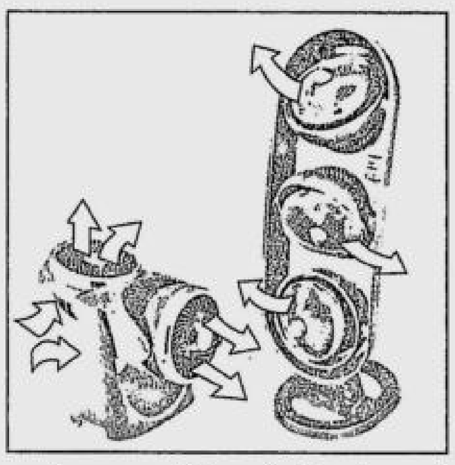
He, however, acknowledged that "government funds are not enough to sustain a world-class training program."

But Lopez said the boxers, coaches, and boxing officials are "gung ho" in approaching the problems they face.

"We will fight for what we are here for. We are here to give honor to our country. We (went to Doha) to get gold medals and we got them," Lopez said.

GOLD and silver winners Antonio "Gaga" Gabica and Jeffrey de Luna of the Philippine billiards team show off medals they won at the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, upon their arrival yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. JESS YUSON





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Anti-graft body sacks NLRC official

By Gil Cabacungan

THE PRESIDENTIAL ANTI GRAFT COMMISsion has recommended the suspension of a top official of the National Labor Relations Commission caught red-handed demanding money from a labor recruiter.

The PAGC said that it was awaiting Malacañang's action on NLRC Commissioner Victoriano Calaycay who, along with Philippine Overseas Employment Administration lawyers Zomer Ochavillo and Augusto Hidalgo and businessman Dennis Gabionza, were caught getting money in an entrapment operation mounted by the National Bureau of Investigation.

Calaycay and his group had demanded P400,000 from Jocelyn Enriquez to have her application for a license to operate a recruitment agency approved.

The PAGC said the graft charges had been filed against Ochavillo and Hidalgo before the Office of the Ombudsman, which is at present investigating the allegations. Calaycay, Ochavillo and Hidalgo are all out on bail set at P30,000 each by a Manila court.

Last week, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion recommended to the PAGC that Calaycay be suspended following the reluctance of colleagues to take action against the commissioner.

An NLRC commissioner is comparable to a justice of the Court of Appeals whose decisions could only be appealed to the Supreme Court by petition for certiorari on questions of law.

PAGC reported that Calaycay and his cohorts were found to have in their possession P200,000 in marked money representing the down payment made by Enriquez in their meeting at a Manila hotel on Dec. 1.

Davao BIR exec charged with graft

By Norman Bordadora

AN OFFICER OF THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue's regional office in Davao City has been charged with graft after she was found to have amassed wealth worth P30 million,despite an annual income of just over P200,000.

The Revenue Intégrity Protection Service (RIPS) of the Department of Finance also filed a forfeiture case before the Ombudsman against revenue officer Marites Nartatez for alleged unexplained wealth that includes a fleet of expensive cars and prime real.

"(Respondent's) net worth (in 1990 when she entered the BIR after being a medical representative) was only P218,320, comprising, among others, a car worth P90,000 and cash savings and jewelry in the aggregate amount of P45,000," the RIPS investigators said.

"It is a matter of record that in 1991, respondent's "declared" net worth jumped to P335,000 in a period of only 12 months," they added in their complaint. They said that from 1990 to 1991, Nartatez annual salary was just over P32,000.

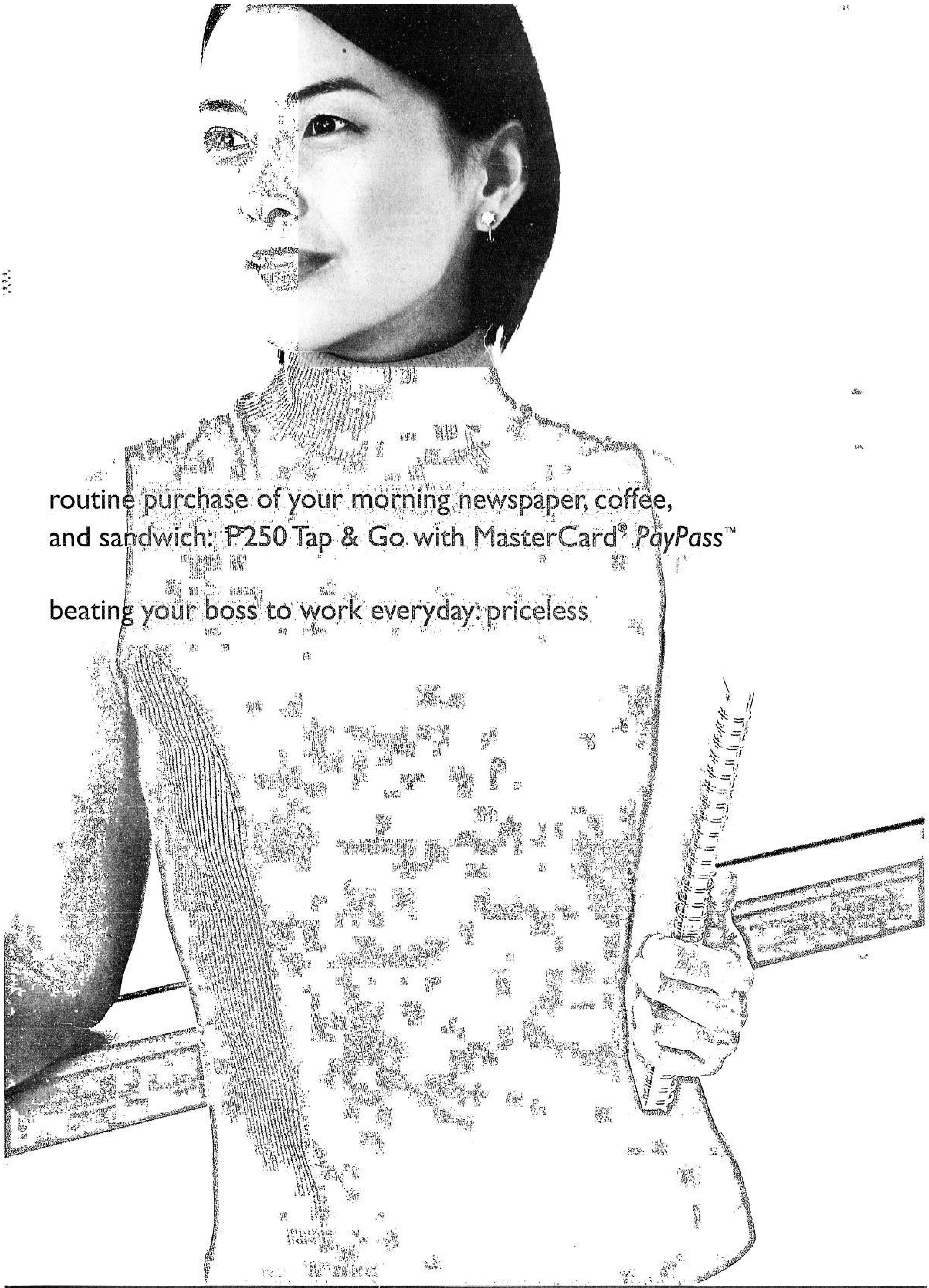
The DOF-RIPS said that by 1995, Nartatez's net worth suddenly increased to more than P1 million.

She also failed to file a SALN in 1994 in violation of the antigraft law and the code of conduct and ethical standards for government hands.

"(Her) ever increasing wealth was punctuated by the acquisition of a Mitsubishi L200 worth P550,000 as well as the setting up of a 'Lechon Manok'" business.

The DOF-RIPS said this was "grossly disproportionate to Nartatez's legitimate means and gross annual salary that (at that time) was limited to P60,504 or only P5,042 per month before taxes."

"(Her) husband had no visible means of income," the investigators said.



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Abandoned RP seamen return home

11 survive for 6 months on doleouts in Albania

By Nikko Dizon

LIKE MANY FILIPINO SEAMEN, they left the country in search of adventure and big dollar earnings. But they ended up spending half a year living in an abandoned ship and surviving on dole-outs from transient Filipino seamen.

On Thursday, these 11 seamen returned home from their strange and unfortunate journey.

Stranger still is the fact that neither the multimillion-funded Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) nor the Great Maritime Ship Management Inc. (GSMI) that had sent them on their way, had kept track of them, and said they did not find about their plight until last month.

Junk ship

The seamen were identified as Ramonito Alagaban, Wilfredo Galila, Vince Tenefrancia, Larry Pablico, Felix Coja, Efren Sabano, Efren Togonon, Nelson Suerte, Noel Ramos, Isidro Zerrudo and Rommel Jalagpas.

The story gathered so far is that they were deployed last July on a junk ship that was undergoing repair at a dry dock in Duress, Albania, a former communist state along the Adriatic Sea coast, west of Macedonia.

"The ship was not allowed to sail because it was not seaworthy, so they stayed on the ship for four months," Marianito Roque, administrator of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa), told the INQUIRER.

Vessel sold

While the Filipino crew were waiting at the dock, the ship was apparently sold to another owner, Roque continues. The seamen were abandoned without money or food.

They subsisted on food doleouts given by fellow Filipino seamen who would come and go aboard ships that docked in Duress. A number of the seamen got sick because of the cold weather.

Their hardships eventually triggered tension and recriminations among the stranded seamen.

Seamen blamed

"Until one of them had had enough and through his family, was able to contact officials and non-government organizations," said Angelo Jimenez, Owwa deputy administrator.

Jimenez blamed the seamen for not immediately reporting their plight to the embassy or the labor attaché.

"To me, that was really strange. If I remember right, I think this is the first time that I encountered such an incident. They were probably hoping that they would still be able to sail," Jimenez said.

He said the Owwa and the Foreign Affairs Department learned about what had happened to the group only early this month.

Last to know

Jimenez also said that the seaman's manning agency, GSMI, was also among the last to know about their plight.

Jimenez said the Owwa would look into the incident and further gather information from the seamen as soon as they have rested and recovered. The seamen arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) on board Cathay Pacific flight CX 901 shortly before lunch.

Brion denies taking up Canadian citizenship

By Jerome Aning

LABOR SECRETARY ARTURO Brion yesterday denied he was a Canadian citizen after Akbayan party-list Rep. Loreta Ann Rosales questioned his citizenship and whether he was qualified to be a member of the Cabinet.

"I categorically state that I am a natural-born Filipino citizen and have never at anytime acquired any other citizenship," Brion said in a statement.

Rosales in a statement had claimed that Brion held another citizenship aside from being a Filipino and that as a consequence could not be secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment under Philippine laws.

She added that if Brion held both Filipino and Canadian citizenships, he should first renounce the latter before he could assume office in government.

The head of the labor department said that the name "Arturo A. Brion" that appeared in Canada's records of its citizens was that of his son, Arturo Articona Brion, a lawyer specializing in intellectual property law in Ottawa. He added that his son was registered in Canada and the United States as a patent agent.

Brion, who will mark his 50th birthday on Dec. 29, however admitted that he migrated to the Canadian province of Ontario during the term of President Corazon Aquino.

"However, I never did apply, much less acquire Canadian citizenship during my stay in Canada," he added.

US Marines bring Christmas cheer to poor kids

By Jocelyn R. Uy

SOME EIGHT SANTAS SNEAKED into a small charity hospital run by a foundation in Parañaque City late Thursday, leaving a large number of toys for the sleeping children patients.

But instead of the familiar jolly fat St. Nick, these Santas were lean soldiers of the United States 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade who flew in from Okinawa, Japan, to bring Yuletide cheer to poor Filipino children under the care of the Foundation of our Lady of Peace Mission Inc. (FOLPMI).

The FOLPMI, which started as a medical mission in 1984 led by Sr. Eva Fidela Maamo, SPC, MD, assists poor neighborhoods and squatter areas in the cities of Parañaque, Las Piñas, Cavite and the resettlement areas and communities of the country's 110 indigenous groups.

The "Operation Goodwill Delivery," as the US Marines Christmas project is called, was carried out even as a Makati lower court and the US government are engaged in a virtual tug-of-war for custody of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, who was convicted last week of raping a Filipino woman.

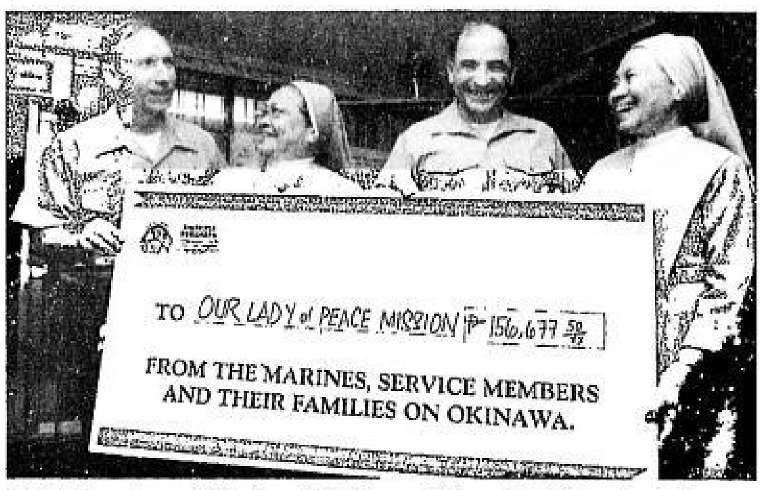
First Lt. Eric Tausch said their operation was in no way related to the issue.

"We have no problem with the legal process....we think that due course will be taken. But our mission here is to do whatever we can to help the Filipino people," Tausch said.

He said the only "disturbance" that prevented the US Marine Santas from coming sooner was the bad weather.

Tausch said the US Marines, service members and their families in Okinawa had organized "Operation Goodwill" in 2003 as a sign of gratitude to Filipino children and families who welcomed them during annual bilateral exercises with the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"We do this on a regular basis, generally around the holiday season to spread Christmas cheer to people who are less fortunate than us. This is our way of saying thanks for their wonderful treatment," he said in an interview.

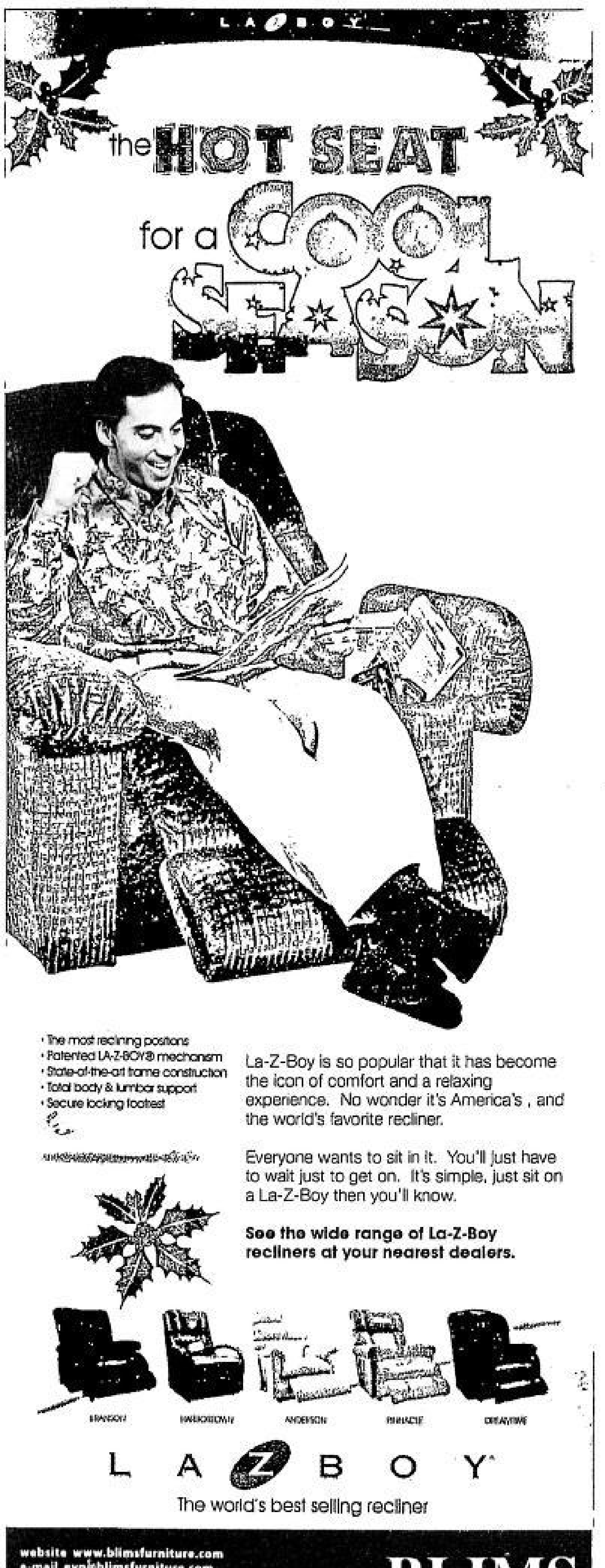

TO OUR LADY of PEACE MISSION P 156,677 50/xx
FROM THE MARINES, SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ON OKINAWA.

BRIG. Gen. Joseph Medina (third from left) and Col. Chester Jolley (left) of the US 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Okinawa, Japan, turn over the check representing P157, 677.50 to the Our Lady of Peace Mission foundation president Sr. Eva Fidela Maamo (right) and Sister Jeanette Grabato (second from left). RUDY ESPERAS

Around 20 US soldiers flew into Manila on Wednesday bringing with them roughly P400,000 that their families back in the US military camps in Japan had pooled together to purchase food, health care items, clothes, sporting goods and toys for poor families and tribes in Metro Manila, Subic in Zambales and Palawan.

Upon arrival, the soldiers made a quick stopover in Divisoria where they bought P160,000 worth of toys for donation to children in 12 day care and 10 feeding centers across the metropolis, Maamo said.

She said the US Marines would gather around 700 children at the foundation's quarters on Dec. 19 for a simple party.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Gov't may lift Lebanon OFW ban

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment is considering lifting the ban on the deployment of Filipino workers to Lebanon and Kazakhstan.

DOLE undersecretary for employment Danilo Cruz told reporters that the lifting of the ban to Tengiz in Kazakhstan was "most likely."

Many Filipino workers left Tengiz, a mining industry center, after it was engulfed by bloody race riots last October.

Cruz said the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, noting the rising number of pending job applications for Tengiz, proposed the lifting of the ban. He said he has relayed the recommendation to Labor Secretary Arturo Brion.

The POEA is also reviewing lifting the ban to Lebanon, which was imposed in July following deadly clashes between Hezbollah guerrillas and Israeli defense forces in southern Lebanon.

"The lifting of the ban for Lebanon is still under review," POEA administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said.

Baldoz said the ban to Lebanon may be lifted soon following the Philippine government's imposition of new hiring rules for domestics.

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2 of 3 Pinoys to vote 'no' to Charter change

From page A1

change being pushed by Ms Arroyo is 79 percent among those dissatisfied with her performance, 57 percent among those neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 54 percent among those satisfied, the SWS said in its November survey.

The question posed in the survey was: "If a plebiscite were held today, would you vote for or against a new constitution that PGMA wants?"

SWS said it conducted its face-to-face interviews of 1,200 "statistically representative households" nationwide from Nov. 24 to 29.

The dates coincided with national debates on a proposal by Ms Arroyo's allies in Congress to set up a constituent assembly that would revise the Constitution and set up a parliamentary form of government with her at the helm.

House leaders later shelved the Arroyo-backed proposal in the face of massive opposition from the Roman Catholic Church, other evangelical groups, the political opposition, union militants, students, business groups and other sectors of civil society.

The survey found that 37 percent were against proposals that would allow members of parliament and the prime minister to be reelected any number of times while 43 percent were against proposals that would allow the interim parliament to serve until the next election, and also to set the date of election, thus putting no limit on its term.

Thirty-four percent opposed the interim parliament introducing further amendments to the Constitution within 45 days, according to the survey.

Most Filipinos (73 percent) did not know that these proposals were part of the Sigaw ng Bayan's people's initiative plan, "validating the Supreme Court's conclusion that the public could not have known the nature of these crucial proposals," SWS said in a statement.

SWS said the "No" vote dominated in all areas.

Three-fourths (74 percent) in Metro Manila will vote "No" in a plebiscite for a new constitution, compared to 85 percent in September and 83 percent in June.

The "No" vote in the rest of Luzon is 67 percent, compared to 68 percent in September and 64 percent in June, SWS said.

In the Visayas the "No" vote is 57 percent from 56 percent in September and 60 percent in June.

In Mindanao, the "No" vote is 69 percent, from 65 percent in September and 68 percent in June.

As for their likelihood of voting in a plebiscite on Charter change, 44 percent will surely vote, 29 percent will probably vote, 9 percent "might be doing something else," and 15 percent will not be able to vote, according to SWS.

Seventy-eight percent in Mindanao, 72 percent in Luzon outside Metro Manila, 70 percent in the Visayas. and 67 percent in Metro Manila will surely or probably vote if a plebiscite were held today, SWS said.

SWS said the survey had an error margin of plus or minus three percent for national percentages.

The two previous SWS national surveys were done over June 22-28 and Sept. 24-Oct. 2, it said. *With a report from Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

650 still missing but Bicol rescue operation called off

From page A1

10-day operations ordered by President Macapagal-Arroyo ended yesterday, despite the hundreds of persons still missing and their next of kin desperate for their bodies to be found.

Bermundo lost six members of her family to the mudflow that buried their house in Padang when Supertyphoon "Reming" struck on Nov. 30.

Not one of her loved ones has been found.

"Even if they are dead, I still want to see them—my husband, my son, my three daughters and my granddaughter," Bermundo said tearfully.

Chief Supt. Victor Boco, chair of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council, said authorities did not want to further expose the search and recovery team to the danger of falling ill in the course of a protracted search.

He said the immediate focus now should be on relief, recovery and the rehabilitation of the entire Bicol region.

"I think the area is already saturated. What we need now is community participation," said Cedric Daep, head of the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office, which is under the supervision of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC).

He said the teams have already searched in all possible areas.

"If they are alive, they should have showed up by now," he said of the missing persons.

As of yesterday, there were still 650 persons missing in Albay and 566 bodies recovered.

Relocation sites

The local governments of Albay, the municipalities of Daraga, Camalig, Guinobatan and Sto. Domingo, and Legazpi City have identified almost all the relocation sites for close to 10,000 families living in high-risk areas around Mayon Volcano.

Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzales has directed the National Housing Authority office in Legazpi to fast-track the development of the identified relocation sites.

On Thursday, Gonzales presided over a meeting that included Ed Laguerta, resident volcanologist of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs)-Bicol, a team from the Mines and GeoSciences Bureau (MGB), and representatives of the Department of Public Works and Highways and nongovernment organizations to discuss the shelter problem.

Legazpi will relocate 1,000 families from seven barangays to an 11-hectare site owned by the city government.

According to city executives, 460 vacant lots are available in Barangay Banquerohan at the southern portion of Legazpi, as well as a resettlement site in Barangay Taysan for families displaced by Mayon's previous eruptions.

Total, partial relocation

Residents of Padang, which recorded the biggest number of casualties among the villages in Legazpi—163 missing and 62 dead—will all be relocated.

Padang bore the brunt of mudflows induced by Reming, according to PDCC records.

Around 450 families (2,790 persons) from the barangay are being sheltered at the Gogon Elementary School, the PDCC said.

Listed for partial relocation are residents of Barangays Matanag, Mabinit, Bonga, Buyuan and Bogtong.

Officials of Daraga town, which registered 148 dead and 207 missing, will relocate a total of 5,397 families to the 8-hectare Anislag resettlement site and a 12-hectare private property in Barangay Tabon-Tabon along the national highway.

Currently sheltered in evacuation sites are 3,948 families (16,799 persons) from Daraga.

Gonzales said residents of Barangays Kilicao, Alcala, Matnog, Banadero, Malobago and Miisi were also listed for total relocation, and residents of Barangays Busay, Cullat, Banag, Binitiyan and Tagas, for partial relocation.

Around 900 families in five Guinobatan barangays (Maipon, Maninila, Tandadora, Morera and San Francisco) will be partially relocated to a site reportedly owned by the Bicol University.

In Camalig, 1,428 families from Barangays Anoling, Tumpa, Sua and Quirangay—all within the 6-kilometer danger zone—will be partially relocated to a 24-hectare site in Barangays Batawon and Baligang.

Sto. Domingo will relocate 820 families from Barangays San Isidro, Lidong, Fidel Surtida and San Antonio to an existing 174-hectare resettlement site in Barangay San Andres.

Private donors

At the meeting, Gonzales said Albay had received pledges for housing and rehabilitation from international NGOs, with one pledge amounting to P1.5 billion.

"We have groups who will help us build houses for our people, such as Care and Habitat for Humanity," he said.

Meg Villanueva, spokesperson for the NGO sector, said they would focus on the repair of schools and day care centers and on establishing food-for-work programs.

Gonzales advised the NGOs to work directly with the Department of Education in the repair of schools and work out an agreement with the local government as part of a tripartite agreement.

Compliance with geohazard mapping

The MGB, an agency under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, cautioned Legazpi officials to avoid building houses and other structures on steep slopes in the targeted relocation site of Banquerohan, a hilly area overlooking the city's commercial district.

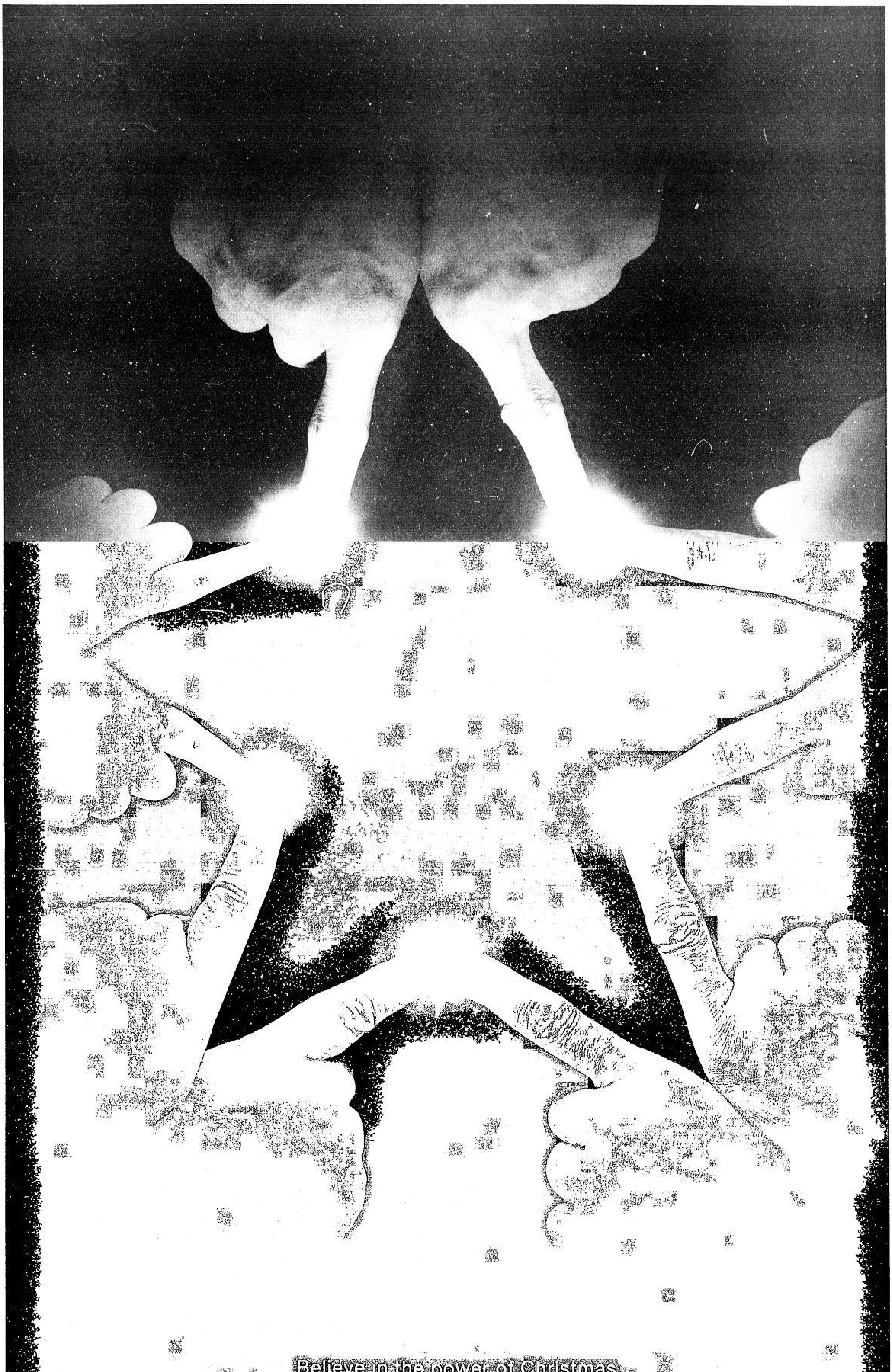
Phivolcs is currently working with the MGB on the on-the-ground validation of the safety level of the identified relocation sites.

RP-UN appeal

The Agence France Presse reported that the Philippines and the United Nations would launch a joint appeal for humanitarian aid to rehabilitate large swathes of the country devastated by four typhoons.

The UN office in Manila yesterday said the cumulative effects of the typhoons, including Reming and "Seniang"—which together left more than 1,400 people dead or missing, would "require longer-term recovery efforts over the next 12 months."

The aid appeal, to be launched on Monday, will help Manila "address immediate needs and in parallel help restore the capacity of the authorities to respond and communities to help themselves," the UN said.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Christmas is a time for hopes and dreams to shine through. From November 22 to December 16, only about 8,000 MW of electricity was available to Luzon, 25% lower than what is usually available to consumers, because of the pipeline maintenance of the Malampaya gas project and the outage of certain power plants. Under the leadership of the First Gen Power Plants, the 1,000 MW Santa Rita, the 500 MW San Lorenzo, the 225 MW Bauang and the 112 MW Pantabangan/Masiway Hydro worked even harder to provide about a fourth of what you needed to make this season bright. Powering the progress of the Filipino is our way of wishing everyone a wonderful Christmas.

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Nograles denies slay plot story a gimmick: That's not my style

By Philip C. Tubeza *In Manila*
and Jeffrey Tupas
and Rizalene Acac
Inquirer Mindanao

IT'S NOT A GIMMICK.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles declared this yesterday to dispute claims by militant groups that the alleged assassination plot against him was just a ploy to divert the public's attention from unpopular moves in the House to amend the Constitution.

"That's not my style. Investigators tell me it's even possible that the militant Left may have a hand in this," the Davao City lawmaker said.

On Thursday, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) revealed the alleged slay plot against Nograles.

But Nograles would not name those allegedly involved in the plot against him.

"I have no idea who would want to attempt to kill me in cold blood, but I trust the Lord will protect me and that His will be done. If it happens, so be it," Nograles said.

He said the NBI was not discounting the possible involvement of the Left in the alleged plot since the militants have been staging protest rallies in his district office in Davao.

NOGRALES LYN RILLON

"NBI intelligence sources also tell me that some high-ranking militant left peoples' names are beginning to surface. But I have good relations with the Left and I do not really believe they will hit me," the lawmaker said.

But militant leaders dismissed the supposed assassination attempt against Nograles as nothing but a poor show and a cheap gimmickry.

"Nograles is politically insignificant to us. We may have criticized him on issues that we believe were antipeople but we will never go down to his level of gimmickry," Ariel Casilao, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Southern Mindanao, said.

Casilao challenged Nograles to name names and present evidence.

"We consider this as part of his tactics to divert the attention of the people, who are now up against moves to change the Constitution," Casilao said.

The NBI had said the plot was to be carried out during the Christmas party of the Association of Regional Executives of National Agencies (Arena) held Wednesday at the Grand Regal Hotel in Davao City.

Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI deputy director for regional operations service, told reporters in Davao City the plot was foiled because Nograles did not attend the party. He sent his son Karlo in his stead.

"According to the information that we got, the congressman will be shot during or after the party… so we had advised him not to attend the party," Esmeralda said.

He said the suspects, whom he did not name, were all from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). He said they were now being hunted down.

GMA vows Filipinos will reap benefits this year

IN A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE to the nation, President Macapagal-Arroyo has promised Filipinos that the fiscal reforms undertaken over the past two years will start paying dividends next year.

"The dawning of the year, it will all come together in the mighty grace of the Lord. The reforms we are implementing will now bear fruit—we will have improved service to our citizens and we expect to have more capital and jobs in the coming days as we continue to fight poverty," read the advance copy of the President's traditional Christmas message.

The President said her mission was to "build prosperity for the greatest number of people."

She called on the public to help the victims of calamities in other parts of the country.

The President's Yuletide message this year contrasted sharply with those of previous Christmases in which she invariably called for unity amid the divisiveness caused by lingering doubts about her legitimacy. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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With Cha-cha out, Palace moves to boost its bets in May 2007 polls

By Christine O. Avendano

AFTER GIVING UP ITS BID TO amend the Constitution and announcing it was gearing for the May 2007 polls, Malacañang is expected to work hard to boost the candidacy of its bets in the senatorial and local races in next year's elections.

"At least, we have a very clear direction now, there will be no more room for blunder which I was afraid of with Cha-cha," Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said yesterday.

"And with the unity of the administration, people will really see the efficiency and cohesiveness of the party," he said in a phone interview.

"We can now really oil the machinery of the administration," he also said.

Unlike most allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo who openly supported the House bid to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly, Defensor had advocated for a constitutional convention. The House majority eventually gave up its pursuit of Con-ass.

DEFENSOR LYN RILLON

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio the other day announced that with President Arroyo putting Charter change in the back burner for now, the administration was now focusing on the polls next year.

Claudio also had said the administration would only announce its senatorial slate after the Christmas holidays.

"Some potential candidates had been sounded out," Claudio said.

Of the Palace announcement that it was preparing for the polls, Claudio said that administration allies, "especially the candidates need to be guided and reassured of the party preparations."

Defensor was not ready though to announce he was running for senator, saying he was leaving it to the administration to make the decision on the bets it will be fielding in the senatorial race.

"Eventually, a decision on who will run will have to be made through a convention or some arrangement," said Defensor, who belongs to the Liberal Party, which is currently split between the camps of Sen. Franklin Drilon and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Saturday, December 16, 2006

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ABC 5	Amerika, Atbp.		Kids TV	TBA	PBA On Tour					Teka Mona		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Shall We Dance		Philippine Idol	PBA On Tour		
ABS-CBN 2		Nagmamahal, Kapamilya		Let's Go		Star Magic Presents		TV Patrol World	Komiks: Pedro Penduko		John En Shirley		XXX		Pinoy Dream Academy		Aalog alog		Sports Unlimited
AXN		Hollow Man				AXN Shakedown		Ultimate Guinness World Records	E Buzz	The Ultimate Fighter (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		House (Season II)		The Amazing Race Asia		Alias (Season V)	
bTV	OverTime: Larry Bird	PBA TV	NBA Spls: Below the Rim	NBA: Bucks @ Bulls					ACC				NBA Live	NBA Fantasy Hoops	NBA: Bucks @ Bulls				
Cartoon Network																	The Brak Show		
Cinema One	Kung Ikaw Ay Isang Panaginip				Spirit Warriors 2: The Shortcut				'Til There Was You				Sana'y Mahalin Mo Rin Ako				Blackbeard		
Cinemax		Firefox				The Big Chill (5:15 PM)				Anacondas: The Hunt For The Blood Orchid				Bloodsport				Blind Justice	
CNN	Next@CNN	World News	Inside The Middle East/CNN Bus. Traveller/Global Office/Global Challenges	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	Living Golf/Revealed/Main Sail/Art of Life	World News	World Sport	World News	Inside The Middle East/CNN Bus. Traveller/Global Office/Global Challenges	CNN Presents/Quest	Next@CNN	Talk Asia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Crime/Suspense		The Unit		The Closer		Law and Order		C/S Chronicles: Cold Case Files		Bones		The Unit		E-Ring		Pelican Brief			
Discovery Channel		Extreme Machines		Why Intelligence Fails		Power Zone				Perfect Disaster		Deadliest Catch		I Shouldn't Be Alive		A Haunting		Perfect Disaster	
Disney Channel	Maya & Miguel	Totally Spies/ Totally Spies 100th Ep	Hannah Montana Catch Up Weekend			Hannah Montana	American Dragon Yr. 2	Emperor's New School	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Mr. Bean	Wonderful World Of Disney			America's Funniest Home Video	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mortified	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN			IBF World Grand Prix - Holland			Women's Pro Billiards '06		LPGA Golf Longs Drug Challenge 2nd Rd				Motorsport Asia	It's Greatest Moments	NBA Action	NBA: 76ers @ Mavericks				
ETC		Everwood Season 2		Friends	Will & Grace	Veronica Mars		The O.C.		Beauty And The Geek		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Nanny 911		Today Show - 1 Hour - Version		Dateline		The Biggest Loser 1		NBC Nightly News	Hollywood One On One	Cold Turkey 2		Inside The Actor's Studio		ER		NBC Nightly News	WSJR
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Special Report With Brit Hume		Fox & Friends Saturday						Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business
GMA 7					Wish Ko Lang		Fantastikids		Pinoy Pop Superstar		Bitoy's Funniest Videos		Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho	Imbestigador			Hokus Pokus		Showbiz Stopped
Hallmark Channel	The Canterville Ghost					Bonanno: A Godfather's Story			Bonanno: A Godfather's Story				Kidnapped Part 1						
HBO	Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy			Real Women Have Curves			The Cookout			The Fugitive				Son Of The Mask			Now On The Big Screen In December	Six Feet Under S2 Stssc	
Hero TV	Super Doll Licca	Pretty Cure	Chrono Crusade	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Mask Rider Faiz	Justirisers	Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Sorcerer Orphen	Forzal Mato	Street Fighter	GPX Cyber Formula	G3	EK TV Special	Weekend Marathon: Beyblade-D-Rumz Weekends				Chrono Crusade	DNAngel
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network		EZ Shop	Auto Review	Japan Video Topics: Amig		Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics: Amig		Brag		EBC Earth Files	Medtalk With Dr. Z		
JackTV	My Name Is Earl	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	Arrested Development	Last Comic Standing		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Daily Show Jon Stewart	X-Men	X-Men	The Batman	Justice League	Wwe Raw				Weekend At The D.L.	Reno 911	Insomniac With Dave Attell	Manshow
Lifestyle Network	HGTV Special		Napa Style	Sheila Bridges: Designer Living	Radical Sabbatical	Simply Wine Andrea Immer	Inside Dish	My Country, My Kitchen	Emeril Live		Iron Chef America		Marga		How Do I Look		Style Star	E! Entertainment Special	
MTV Philippines	MTV Hits	2006 MTV Staying Alive Music Summit for HIV/AIDS						Cribs	My Own	The Hills	8th & Ocean	MTV Live: Arctic Monkeys	Spankin New Music	MTV Hits		MTV Hits		Jams	Rockola
MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	MYX Presents		Take 5	Radio MYX	MYXellaneous	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Live!		Pinoy MYX Countdown				MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Taiwan To The World		Extraterrestrial				Sea Hunters		About Asia		Ultimate Experience		Top Gun Week		Family Specials		No Borders	
NBN											The Working President	GSIS Member's Hour		Isang Hour On NBN		A.S.K.		Krusada Kontra Krimen	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Quadrigo	The Planet	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		Net 25 Weekend Report	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Tribe	Convergence	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubuyog		Net 25 Weekend Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	The Fairly Odd Parents	Catscratch	The X's	Danny Phantom	Trollz	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Ang Pagbabalik Ni Kumander Lawin				Coach				Dyesebel				Tatlo Silang Tatay Ko				Roses And Lollipops
Qtv		Lois And Clark		Elemental Gerad		Posh		The Return Of Wonder Woman		Aytil Robot		Day-Off		Sabado Showdown				Moby Dick	
RPN 9										Wwe Raw		CSI: NY		Saturday Night Playhouse					
SBN 21								Barangay Uniting thru Chats		Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kaliwanagan		Shepherds Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports	AG M Singles Semis 2	AG W Singles Semis 1	AG W Singles Semis 2	FIVB		Hoop Nation		Hoop Nation		WNCAA		Rookie Manual	Pinoy Rider	K1				ECW	
Star Movies				Baywatch Hawaiian Wedding			AVP: Alien Vs. Predator				Today You Die (7:25 PM)			Just Friends			Raising Helen (10:45PM)		
Star World		Third Watch		Miami Vice		Desire Table For Three		Philly		One Tree Hill		TNA Xplosion		Ghost Hunters		J.A.G		Mutant X	
Studio 23								Sports TV	Pinoy Dream Academy		Survivor Cook Islands		Supernatural		Barkada Nights				Real Deal
UnTV				KNC Show	Ang Dating Daan	Chika Mo, Chika Ko		Believer TV				Ang Dating Daan							

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

UK pedophile arrested

By Jerome Aning

THE BUREAU OF IMmigration has arrested another foreign pedophile, this time a Briton, who is also wanted in his homeland for raping his daughter.

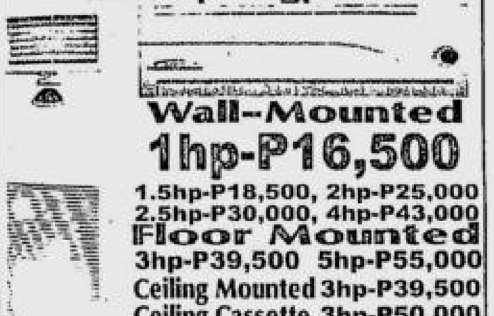
Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. announced yesterday that Kriss McCord, 57, was arrested on Dec. 7 in Llancra, Nueva Ecija, by agents from the bureau, the Philippine Center on Transnational Crimes and the police.

PCTC had requested the BI for the foreigner's arrest. McCord, when collared, was with his Filipino live-in wife.

Fernandez said McCord was the fourth alien fugitive and third child molester to fall into the hands of immigration agents in the past three weeks.

He would be deported to the United Kingdom where he was convicted in November 1999 for three counts of rape and four counts of indecent assault by the Nottingham Crown Court.

He was found guilty of raping his daughter when the latter was between five and 15 years old. McCord was also being investigated for alleged indecent assault against his granddaughter, a case which is still pending in court.



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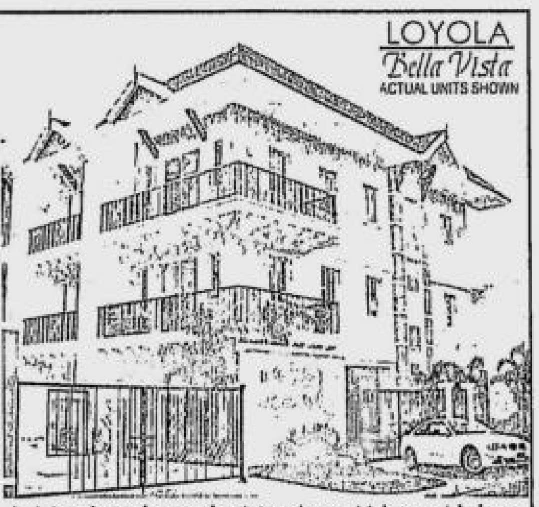

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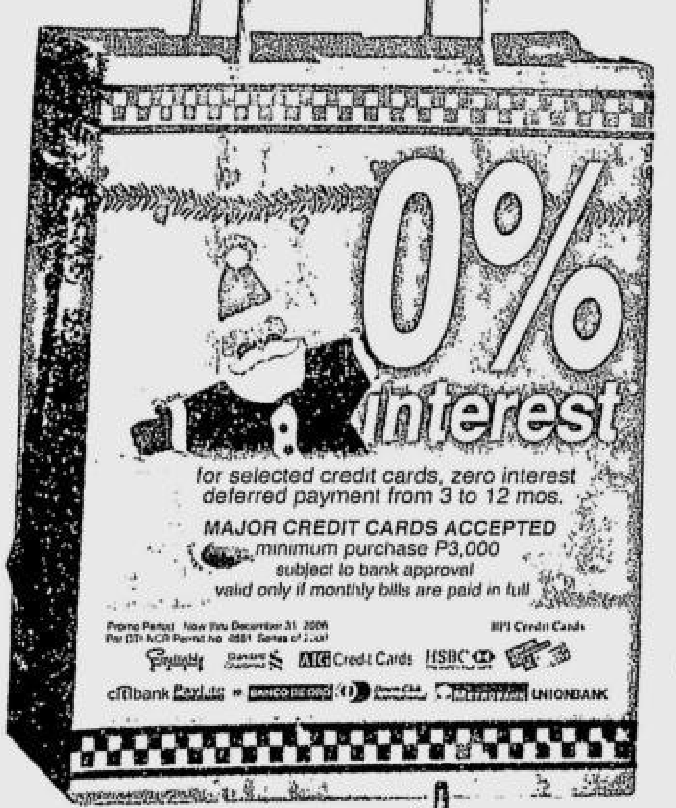

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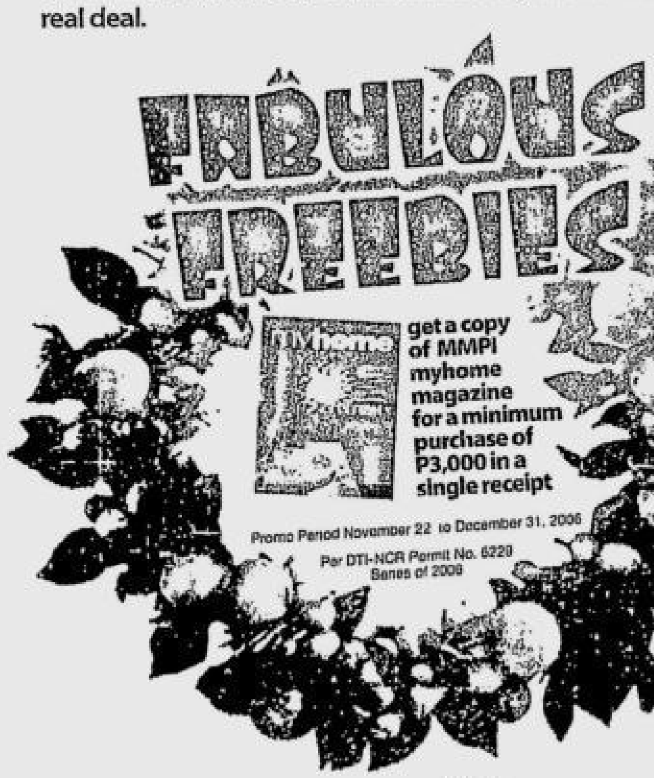

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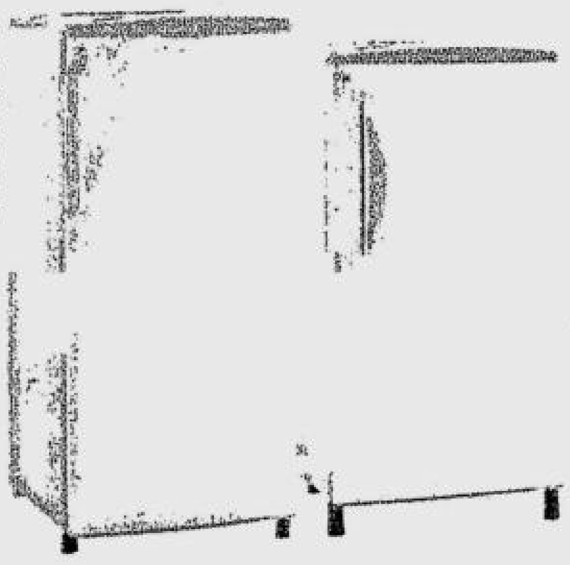

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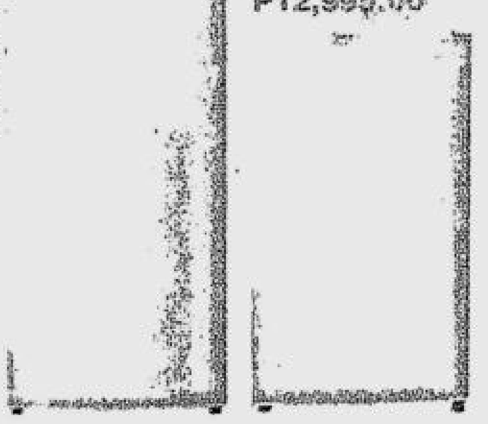

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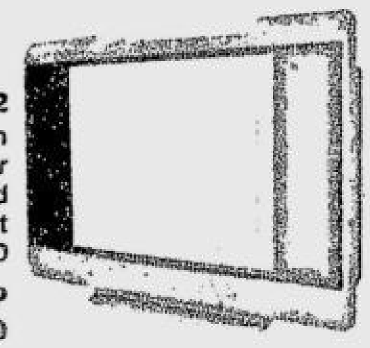

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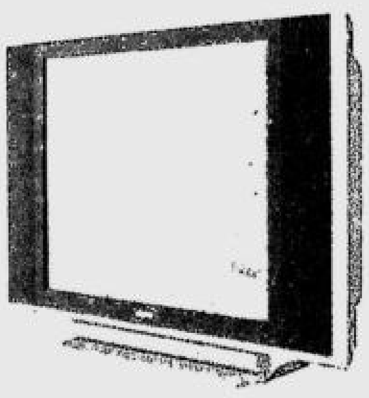

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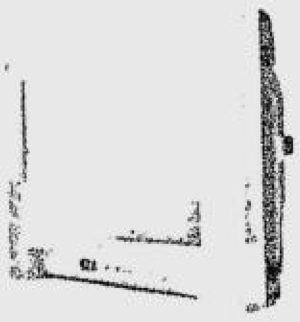

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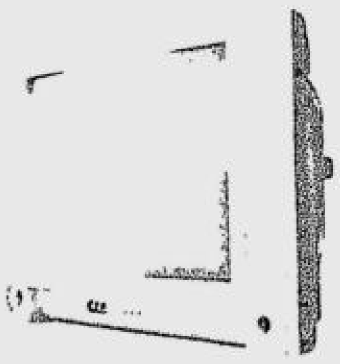

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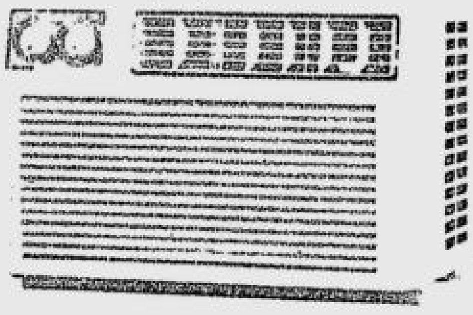

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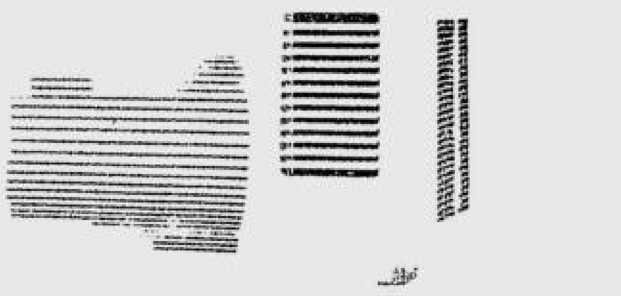

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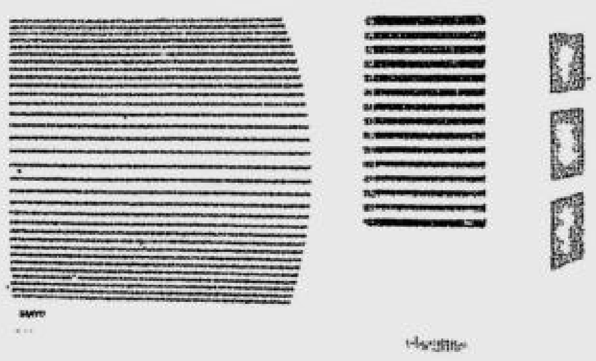

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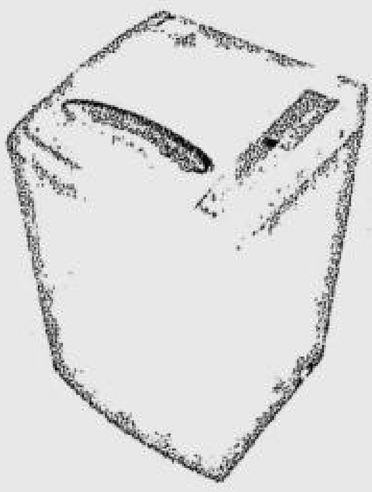

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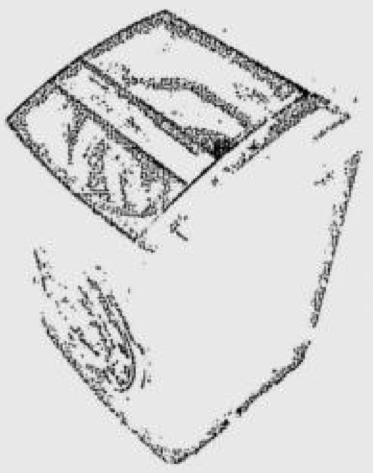

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Gov't employees warned: Don't accept Christmas gifts

By Norman Bordadora

'TIS THE SEASON TO HAND OUT PRESENTS—but not to government employees.

They have been ordered not to accept Christmas gifts in order to avoid any appearance of bribery.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez issued the warning yesterday, citing various laws that bar public officials from receiving or "requesting" gifts from anyone outside of their families.

"It's better to give than to receive," Gutierrez said, calling on the public to report officials who ask them for "gifts" in exchange for a service during the Christmas season.

"Government officials and employees should not request nor accept any form of gifts or favors this holiday season, especially if they come from suppliers, contractors and clients," she said.

Accepting gifts from "a person other than the government employee's relative or family" is considered a corrupt act under the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, Gutierrez said.

Moreover, the solicitation of gifts is one of the "prohibited acts and transactions" under the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, she added.

"Government officials and employees who ask for or accept any gift may be construed as extortion or bribery and is a ground for the filing of administrative and criminal charges," Gutierrez said.

Assistant Ombudsman Evelyn Baliton said that government offices should instead adopt the guidelines for gifts during the holidays.

Some front line government offices in the past instituted measures such as prohibiting employees from greeting members of the public "Merry Christmas" because of the connotation that they were soliciting monetary gifts. *With AFP*

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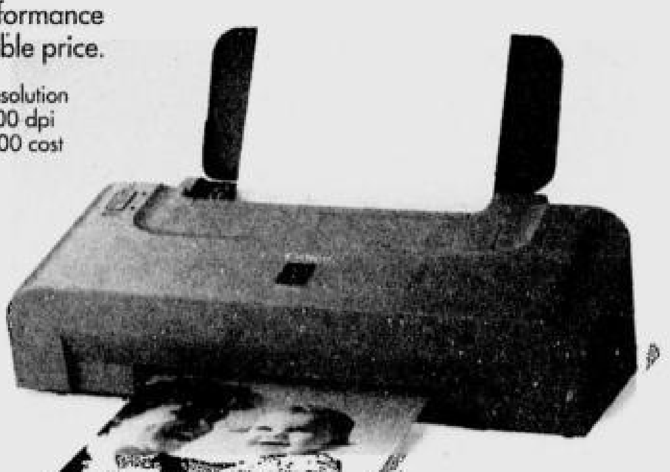

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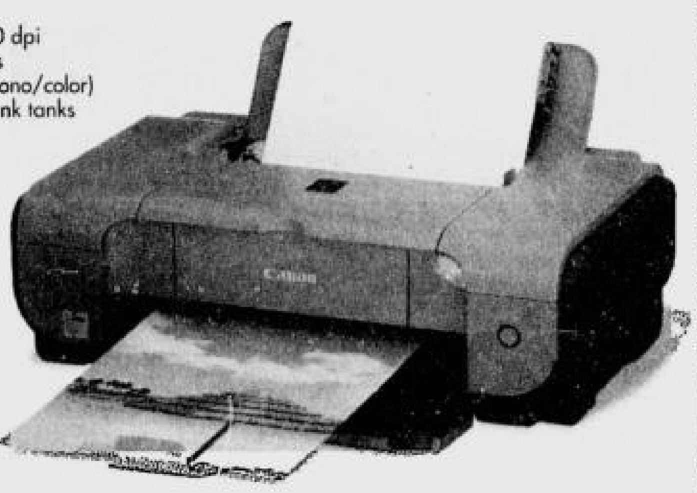

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Repentance

IT IS ADVENT, NOT LENT, BUT ONE CONGRESSMAN has called the members of the majority in the House of Representatives to repentance. "I am sorry for the mistake we made," Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco told a local radio station Wednesday. "It was a mistake. We have to admit our mistakes. It was a blunder, and we have to correct the mistake. No matter how we would try to argue our way out of what we have done, the House made a mistake. Mea culpa. Mea culpa."

EDITORIAL

The mistake was, of course, the midnight express that pro-administration congressmen drove on the way to overhauling the Constitution, primarily to bring about a unicameral, parliamentary system of government. For two nights last week, the administration lawmakers worked overtime to change their own rules to cut short the process of amending the fundamental law by dispensing with committee hearings as well as the three "readings" traditionally required before bills and resolutions are debated and voted upon by House members. The purpose of their exertions was to sideline the Senate, which had rejected their call to vote itself out of existence. They wanted to change the Constitution, and they would allow nothing to stand in the way—not an uncooperative Senate, not an unenthusiastic public, not even the Constitution itself which prescribes quite clearly how its revision can be legally done.

But the railroaders in the House failed to reckon with the growing disgust and anger of religious leaders over their headlong rush to change the Charter. After witnessing the midnight madness two nights in a row, the religious leaders had enough. Led by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, they summoned the faithful to gather in prayer and in protest against the underhanded methods being employed by the administration lawmakers.

Instantly, the administration's resolve dissolved. Speaker Jose de Venecia pronounced the House plan to convene as a constituent assembly dead, and announced that he would support holding a constitutional convention to revise the Charter but in the House's own "sweet time." President Macapagal-Arroyo went even further, practically abandoning the effort all together, saying: "Philippine democracy will always find the proper time and opportunity for Charter reform at a time when the people deem it ripe and needful and in the manner they deem proper."

And the congressmen who toiled late into the night to tamper with the fundamental law? They have been left to rue the day they rushed to revise the House rules and the Charter and to survey the ruins of their reputations and their ambitions. Even those who deem it proper to make a public apology like Cuenco have to deal with doubts about the honesty of their intentions. When Cuenco explained that he just went along with the party's stand supporting a constituent assembly, one priest said the lawmaker had compromised his integrity. "Don't they have minds of their own?" Msgr. Achilles Dakay, media liaison officer of the Cebu archdiocese, asked.

Of course, they do. But their minds were focused on getting the many irresistible rewards dangled before them. Like getting a term extension of five months, possibly even longer, while they set about amending the Constitution. Like the possibility of staying in the House for life, with the lifting of term limits, or getting family members to inherit their congressional seats. Plus the goodies allegedly distributed during the late-night sessions and the pork barrel being readied for rolling into the hands of friends of the administration.

What seems clear is that not having minds of their own—and not even using them well—was the least of the sins of those who pushed for a constituent assembly in the House. It was their unthinking ambition and unbridled greed that brought the nation close to a constitutional crisis.

But now that they have dropped their dark enterprise, is it time to forgive and forget everything they have done? The bishops apparently think not, and so they have not called off the protest rallies.

Neither should the Filipino people forget so quickly. They should remember it at least until May when they go to vote and impose the correct penance on these lawmakers, which is to throw them out of office.

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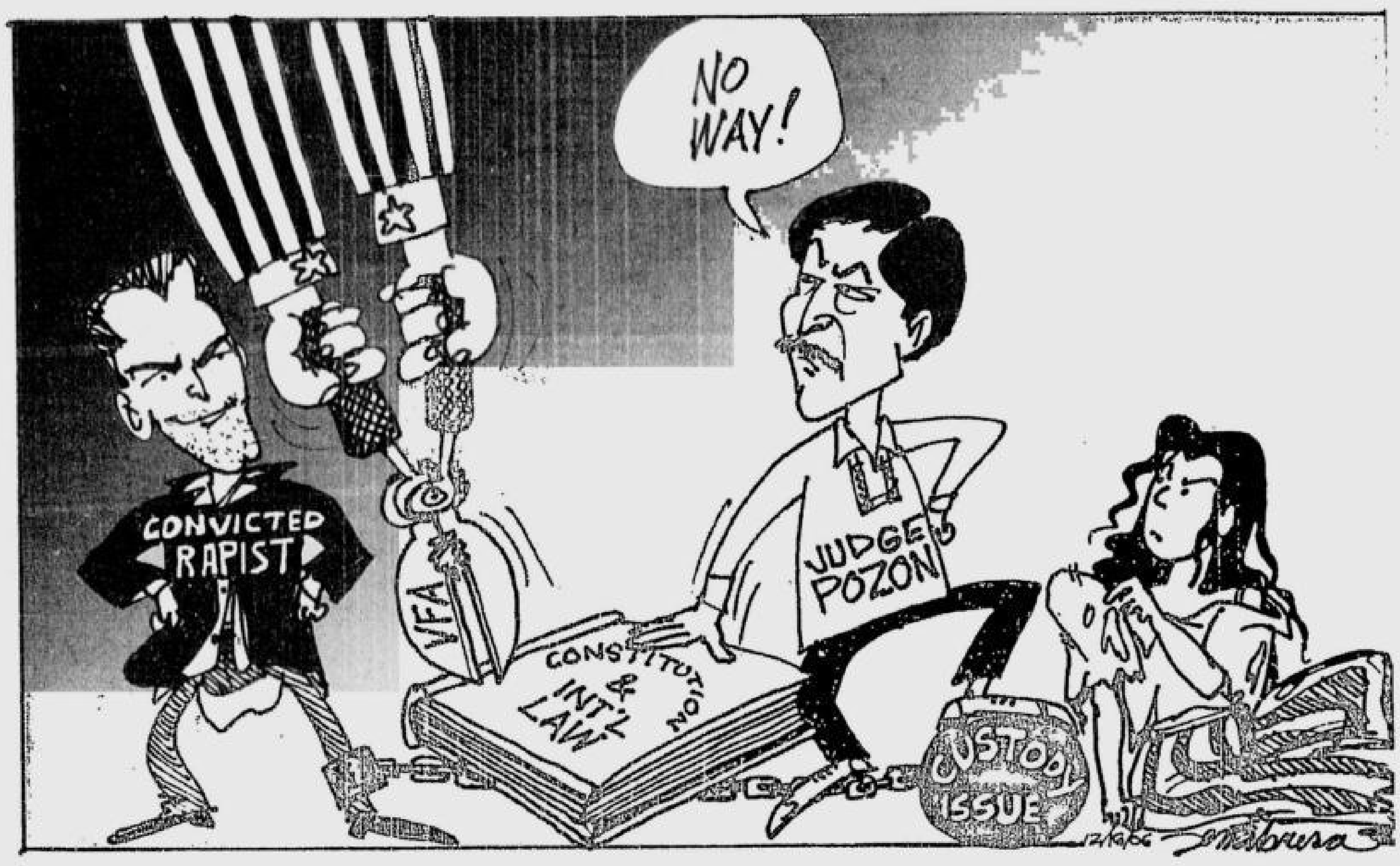

An acting Chief Justice?

(I wrote the following article last week but replaced it when Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno was permanently appointed as such on December 8. I am publishing it now against the possible renewal of the proposal to appoint judges, and especially justices, in an acting capacity.)

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I'M ALL FOR PROTECTING THE INDEPENdence of the Judiciary but not through the appointment of an acting chief justice. Acting appointments of judges are unconstitutional, most especially of the highest judicial official in the land. Even the lowly municipal judge cannot be appointed in an acting capacity. An acting Chief Justice would make the Supreme Court particularly vulnerable to the blandishments, i.e., the commands, of a President of the Philippines disrespectful of the Constitution.

An acting appointment is essentially revocable in the discretion of the appointing power. The excuse is simply explained as lack or loss of confidence in the temporary appointee: In the case of a judge and more so of a justice, his removal may be provoked by a decision he has rendered in disobedience to a presidential order or suggestion. The punishment is a political question that is not subject to judicial review

To avoid such discipline, the acting appointee will, as a measure of self-preservation, tend to obey the wishes of the President of the Philippines regardless of their merit. The instinct for survival with all its political and material benefits will often prevail over the biddings of conscience and the obligations of public office.

If he were only an acting appointee, Justice Antonio T. Carpio might now be out of the Supreme Court for having written the majority decision in the Initiative Case against President Arroyo's known persuasions. She could have legally punished him for betraying her confidence. The fact that she could not do so despite her displeasure fortifies the independence of the Supreme Court and the Judiciary in general.

In the case of Nacionalista Party v. Bautista, 85 Phil. 101, the Supreme Court held that the temporary designation of the Solicitor General as a member of the Commission on Elections was prohibited as inimical to its independence, This rule is now constitutionalized in Art. IX-C, Sec. 1(2) providing that "in no case shall any Member (of that body) be appointed or designated in a temporary or acting capacity."

Also in point is the case of Brillantes v. Yorac, 192 SCRA 358. After the retirement of Chairman Hilario G. Davide Jr. from the Commission on Elections, President Corazon Aquino designated Commissioner Haydee B. Yorac as Acting Chairman of that body. The petitioner questioned the respondent's title and invoked the doctrine announced in the Bautista Case.

I had the privilege of being the ponente of that subsequent case where I wrote for the Supreme Court in part:

"A designation as Acting Chairman is by its terms essentially temporary and therefore revocable at will. No cause need be established to justify its revocation. Assuming its validity, the designation of the respondent as Acting Chairman of the Commission on Elections may be withdrawn by the President of the Philippines at any time and for whatever reason she sees fit. It is doubtful if the respondent, having accepted such designation, will not be stopped from challenging its withdrawal.

"It is true, as the Solicitor General points out, that the respondent cannot be removed at all from her permanent position as Associate Commissioner. It is no less, true, however, that she can be replaced as Acting Chairman, with or without cause, and thus deprived of the powers and perquisites of that temporary position.

"The lack of a statutory rule covering the situation at bar is no justification for the President of the Philippines to fill the void by extending the temporary designation in favor of the respondent. This is still a government of laws and not of men. The problem allegedly sought to be corrected, if it existed at all, did not call for presidential action. The situation could have been handled by the members of the Commission on Elections themselves without the participation of the President, however well-meaning.

"In the choice of the Acting Chairman, the members of the Commission on Elections would most likely have been guided by the seniority rule as they themselves would have appreciated. In any event, that choice and the basis thereof were for them and not the President to make."

Under the internal rules of the Supreme Court, the Senior Associate Justice takes over in the absence of the Chief Justice. The replacement is only temporary, and only in the performance of routinary functions like presiding at the sessions of the Court and receiving official visitors. The discharge of important prerogatives remains with the Chief Justice.

On one occasion when Chief Justice Narvasa had to attend to an important matter elsewhere, I took over for him and announced at the start of our session en banc that I was giving all Court personnel a 100 percent salary increase. Everybody smiled and wished I was not joking.

See you at the prayer rally

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE STARTING POINT OF MY CAREER AS AN enthusiastic participant in rallies, marches, vigils and demonstrations was the noise barrage following the 1978 Batasang Pambansa elections. The middle-aged reader will recall that almost literally by word of mouth (no cell phones, no texts), citizens were urged to make as much noise as possible at a certain time to protest the "defeat" of Ninoy Aquino, who—if the votes counted by Comelec Chairman Leonardo Perez were any indication—was beaten handily by total non-entities whose names cannot even now be recalled.

Our house then was—as it still is—in front of the house of Juan Ponce Enrile, who was at the time Marcos' secretary of defense. Tooting my car horn and beating pots and pans at the appointed hour were not the easiest thing to do, more so because we had no idea how many others would be doing the same thing in their houses and in the streets, and what the sanctions would be. There were no organizational meetings and nose counts--this was at the height of martial law. But one has to do what one has to do—and the din that broke out at the scheduled time (I could hear it on Edsa), even as we were busily honking and beating away, was the sweetest of sounds.

That was 28 years ago, and since then, I have participated in marches, vigils, demonstrations, rallies that have made and changed the course of history, up to and including Edsa I and Edsa II, as well as the activities undertaken in commemoration of the former. But the participation stopped last year—because I thought that these "people power" demonstrations were being abused or misused. I did not even attend the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of People Power early this year, because I felt that there were elements who were just riding on the celebration to achieve their own selfish motives, desecrating the significance of the event.

But I am breaking my self-imposed no-participation rule tomorrow—as I attend the prayer rally being organized by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. Because, for one, this is the first time that the CBCP has called for such a rally, so far as I can remember—and a nationwide call at that. Second, because there seems to be a sincere attempt to reduce, if not eliminate, any partisan bias in that rally—meaning, groups that are thinking of exploiting the event for their own partisan or ideological purposes are being discouraged from doing so. Third, and a related point to the second, this is an opportune time for the "middle" forces to stand up and be counted, as we pray for peace and unity in our country, and for a leadership that will think of the country first and foremost. I consider myself part of the middle forces.

Of course, the prayer rally has political objectives—but not partisan ones, just as the National Movement for Free Elections engages in a political exercise, but is avowedly nonpartisan. One recognizes that the CBCP called for this prayer rally because it was aghast at the lower House's bulldozing tactics, its willingness to ride roughshod over the Constitution (and the Senate) even as its articulated objective was to improve it. So was I aghast—as should have been every Filipino citizen of good will.

But that the House has backed down—don't even think that it was because the leadership had a conversion experience, they just realized that they no longer had the numbers (195), because the representatives from urban areas were getting cold feet—is absolutely no reason for the CBCP to back down from their rally as well. Neither should President Macapagal-Arroyo's position change the bishops' stance. And by the way, one cannot resist commenting that the President's volte-face was a class act, compared to the blustering, threatening, victory-claiming, righteous-indignation performance of Joe de Venecia as he attempted to snatch some PR mileage from the jaws of defeat.

And I don't want to hear those arguments about how these bishops are ignoring the separation-of-Church-and-State constitutional provision. Nonsense. Just because one is a cleric doesn't mean that he cannot exercise his rights as a Filipino citizen, including criticizing his government. As a matter of fact there is nothing in our Constitution or laws that prohibits a member of the clergy or the religious to run for office (that would be discriminatory). What prevents (Catholic) clergymen from running for office is the Canon Law which forbids them from doing so. I think a Catholic clergyman needs express permission from the Pope to do so. Any politician or government official who cites the principle of the separation of Church and State is being deliberately obtuse, or just plain stupid.

Let's face it, there is a lot to pray for: vigilance on our part, resolve to be more aware of the issues; enlightenment and integrity not only for our leaders but also for ourselves; unity; responsible voting; electoral reforms, thanksgiving for the political leaders who put the country above themselves (and we have them, let's not sell ourselves too short), maybe, even thanksgiving that a constitutional rape was avoided. The list goes on and on. Who knows? Maybe, the nation that prays together will stay together.

It is worth a try. What's more, maybe, our collective prayer will serve to encourage us to redouble our efforts to work for a better country. Who said that we must pray as if everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on us?

I've had disagreements with bishops on many issues. Not on this one. See you at the rally.

Senators should explain stand on VFA controversy

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TOMORROW'S PRAYER RALLY-CUM-PROTEST by anti-Cha-cha forces was triggered mainly by the House resolution authorizing a "House-only" constituent assembly. Various sectors of society felt outraged that the House majority coalition—by sheer force of numbers—amended Sec. 105 of Rule XV of the 13th Congress by deleting one sentence. This, contend the critics, was done in order to ram the Con-ass vote in the shortest possible time.

The House has since shifted tactics and is now espousing a constitutional convention, but the flames of outrage are still being fanned by some sectors. I have studied the explanation offered by Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman, who defended that deletion on the floor, in the hope that it could help clear the air. Lagman sought to make a clear distinction between the House's "legislative" function (passing bills) and its "constituent" or charter-amending/revising function. It's important to make this distinction, Lagman said, as this would explain many things (e.g., why both houses of Congress do not have to vote separately when proposing a Con-ass). He stressed that the Supreme Court, as early as Nov. 9, 1967, in Gonzales vs Comelec, made two rulings upholding this difference. There the Court clearly stated that when Congress proposes amendments to the Constitution, "Senators and Members of the House act, not as members of Congress, but as component elements of a constituent assembly."

Lagman also stressed that what the antis overlooked was the fact that under the Rules of the 13th Congress, there is only one rule on amendments, which is Sec. 150. This reads: "Any provision of these Rules, except those that are also embodied in the Constitution, may be amended by a majority vote of all the Members of the House."

What House members, like Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Makati Rep. Teddy Boy Locsin, have repeatedly stressed is that the House move to amend Sec. 105 was valid and legally defensible. But it was painted by spin doctors as something morally reprehensible and, in the end, it turned out to be politically unsound.

* * *

A new flash-point in RP-US relations has emerged in the decision of Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon on the "Nicole" rape case. Pozon ruled that the US Embassy can no longer take custody of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith after his conviction. He argued that this is no longer needed inasmuch as his appearance in court would no longer be required during the appeals process. But this is a personal judgment he's exercising and the government asserts that this runs contrary to the provision of the Visiting Forces Agreement.

Article V, Par. 6 of the VFA says, **"The custody of any US Embassy personnel over whom the Philippines is to exercise jurisdiction shall immediately reside with United States military authorities, if they so request, from the commission of the offense until completion of all judicial proceedings." The US Embassy has filed for custody of Smith, after his lawyers appealed his conviction with the Court of Appeals.**

The bone of contention is the phrase "completion of all judicial proceedings." The embassy and Smith's lawyers argue that this refers to the whole range of legal action—from the conviction at the trial court to the appeal, and even up to the final judgment. The common thinking is that an appeal is a "new trial," so that custody by the US authorities is called for under VFA.

* * *

Those defending Pozon's decision, however, argue that while paragraph 6 governs custody of the accused, it already looks at the convicted felon and provides for a mutually agreed-upon facility in RP territory. They also say the VFA provides a timetable of one year during which a foreign authority has custody over an accused, and that period is over in Smith's case. Pozon has asserted, moreover, that the Constitution's national sovereignty provision takes precedence over any international treaty commitment. But one could also cite the fact that the same Charter makes our international commitments sacrosanct, which the US government has been quick to remind us.

* * *

The government, through the foreign affairs and justice departments, has said it intends to honor that commitment and support the US government's petition for custody. Yesterday the Office of the Solicitor General was set to file a "petition in intervention," but Pozon, egged on by his militant admirers, appears bent on upholding his decision.

I'm not a lawyer, but it seems pretty clear to me—and even to neophyte law students—that "completion of judicial proceedings" covers a case on appeal. It's hard to understand what Pozon's game is, but this controversy could undermine the government's credibility in the international community. I just hope this is not what he wants to happen.

* * *

The militants are clamoring to have the VFA renegotiated, and indeed this may be needed in the light of developments in this recent case. But renegotiation will take time. Meanwhile, its provision on custody should be upheld.

It would be very helpful if the senators would explain their views on this issue, for after all, that chamber ratified the VFA under Sec. 21, Article VII of the Constitution. Senators Miriam Santiago, who chairs the Senate VFA oversight committee, Richard Gordon and Juan Ponce Enrile have already said they support the government's position upholding the VFA. But the rest of the senators have not been heard from. Are they fence-sitting again?

* * *

On Monday, Dec. 18, famed visionary Vassula Ryden will speak on "True Life in God," on the inspirations she has been receiving since 1985, at the 3rd floor, Freedom Hall, Lyceum of the Philippines in Intramuros, Manila, after the 6:30 p.m. Mass to be officiated by Bishop Ramon C. Arguelles. The public is invited.

Medicine for 'fun'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ARSENIO "ART" NG IS AN ENTREPRENEUR WITH a string of successful investments. And so he trusted his instincts when he "smelled" a business opportunity in medical tourism.

"Whenever I traveled abroad, I noticed that there were so many elderly couples among the tour groups I joined," Ng recalls. "Wherever I went in Europe or even in the United States, I would encounter mostly people in their late 50s, 60s or 70s. Very seldom would I meet a young person. That was when I saw for myself that indeed aging populations are a global trend."

Where others might see the onset of the so-called "demographic winter" or a worrying trend toward graying, dependent populations, Ng saw a market. "These are retired folk who have already raised their families and have a lot of disposable income," Ng notes. Major improvements in health and health care also mean that many senior citizens are far from the feeble, sickly disabled stereotypes of old.

So when the government, specifically the Department of Tourism, started getting serious about launching a medical tourism program, Ng jumped on the bandwagon. Following the lead of countries like Thailand and Singapore, the Philippines is seriously pursuing a program of luring foreigners into the country to undergo medical procedures that cost half or a third of the cost in developed countries while assuring clients of quality service, especially competent and caring medical personnel.

But Ng thinks the "senior citizens" market holds the most potential for medical tourism. "I think the Philippine Retirement Authority got it all wrong at the start," he says. "They were trying to lure retirees living abroad to move to the Philippines by offering them incentives like tax breaks. But these folks don't need tax breaks!"

Instead, Ng thought of tapping the retirees' market by offering "a new life."

"Who cares about tax incentives?" says Ng. "I want to have fun!"

* * *

BUT Ng has a very unusual definition of "fun."

"I offer senior citizens the chance to start anew in the Philippines," he says. "And part of that new, fun beginning is a more youthful appearance," which, he says, can be achieved mainly through cosmetic surgery.

Together with a group of doctors and consultants who had started out with the Clinica Manila group, which had put up "non-hospital based" clinics in malls, Ng has established Managed Care, a health maintenance organization (HMO) that has its headquarters in a building along Shaw Boulevard, in a clinic that offers state-of-the-art services, including nine operating rooms.

Cosmetic procedures—face lifts, nose jobs, breast enhancement, liposuction—will be the "key gateway," Ng says, to the retiree and senior citizen market abroad. "Of course the Philippines has much more to offer," he adds, "there's our tropical weather, the beauty of our beaches, sun, sand." But older people will be able to appreciate these even more when they are given a "new lease on life," a more adventurous, positive outlook that is complemented by a more youthful appearance.

"Not everyone wants to go to a hospital, especially for elective surgery," Ng says. "You're going under the knife to improve your appearance; you don't want to be among the sick and the dying." And that is why his clinics will offer their clients a "clean, hygienic" environment while assuring them that they will receive topnotch service from a team of professionals.

* * *

AMONG them is Dr. James Joaquinio, a plastic surgeon who is also the second chief of surgery at the UE Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center and who heads the medical department of Managed Care.

Beginning about 10 years ago, Joaquinio recounts, he noticed that the bulk of patients coming in for cosmetic surgery were OFWs and *balikbayans*, who not only had the disposable income to spend on elective procedures but also found the cost of such procedures here incredibly cheap. "We were charging about one-third the fees charged by doctors in the US," he says.

Managed Care seeks to "make these procedures more accessible to the public at more affordable rates, at the hands of board certified doctors." This is a particular concern of Joaquinio and the medical community.

"In the last few years," says Joaquinio, "we have begun seeing so many patients who come to us for complications of previous procedures done on them by unlicensed practitioners." What particularly alarms him is that in many cases, these botched procedures can no longer be corrected, leaving patients disfigured, if not actually suffering health complications.

* * *

JOAQUINIO has an entire slide presentation of such catastrophic failures, including a woman whose nose job had been infected, making it difficult for her to breathe.

"We need to educate the public," Joaquinio pleads. "It means a lot if your cosmetic surgeon is board certified. You need to go through six years of general surgery and three years of plastic surgery training. You need to pass two board exams."

Anyone contemplating undergoing cosmetic surgery here, he says, need only consult the College of Surgeons or any accrediting body to see if the doctor has been duly licensed and certified.

When I asked if he knew who among the better-known practitioners were board certified, he said crisply: "Of course I would know, there are only 65 board certified plastic surgeons in the country!"

His concerns are valid and legitimate. After all, it would take just a single death of a medical tourist at the hands of an incompetent doctor to kill the entire medical tourism industry.

A new era of peace for Aceh

WORLD VIEW

Javier Solana

THIS WEEK, THE ACEH MONITORING MISSION (AMM), led by the European Union, completed its mandate of monitoring the peace agreement, signed 16 months ago by the government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), with peace firmly established in the Indonesian province of Aceh.

After 30 years of continuous armed conflict, peace and stability have been restored. The people of Aceh can now move and express their opinions freely. They can enjoy life in their communities without fear.

Perhaps the best proof of the progress made over the past 16 months is the fact that the first ever direct, democratic local elections were held in Aceh earlier this month and former rebels were able to stand as independent candidates. While we await the outcome, the European Union is confident that the election results will be respected and will contribute to the further consolidation of the peace process for the benefit of the people of Aceh and of Indonesia as a whole.

The European Union encouraged the efforts for peace in Aceh from day one by providing political and financial support for the negotiations in Helsinki that led to the signing of the peace agreement. However, without the political vision of the government of Indonesia and of the GAM, who respected the undertakings given in Helsinki from the beginning, and the support of the people of Aceh, the AMM would not have been possible.

The EU will continue to stand by the people of Aceh in the ongoing peace and reconciliation process. We remain firmly committed to our goal of peace in Aceh, with dignity for all. Because this is the basis for a prosperous and democratic Aceh within the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia.

To achieve that goal, we are ready to provide support on all levels. In addition to AMM, the peace-monitoring mission, the EU has deployed an Election Observation Mission which will stay in Aceh for a possible second round of elections. To ensure that the peace in Aceh is permanent, we are also backing the process with flanking measures, as part of a comprehensive approach that includes reintegration support to former GAM combatants and technical assistance and capacity-building in local governance and police training. These programs will continue for years to come.

There is still plenty of work ahead. The reintegration efforts for the victims of the conflict as well as the reconstruction of houses and infrastructure destroyed by the December 2004 tsunami will have to be embedded in longer-term programs benefiting all affected citizens of Aceh. This will be a further step in normalizing the situation in post-tragedy Aceh.

The AMM is a new departure for the EU in more ways than one. Not only is it the first time that the European Union has deployed a mission in Asia, it is also the first time that we have worked in partnership with the member-countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean). Five Asean members—Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand—provided monitors alongside the participating European countries. In every part of the mission, the AMM has had fully integrated teams of EU and Asean monitors working together, contributing their comparative strengths and skills. This cooperation has worked extremely well, including in the field, where conditions were tough, as I was able to observe personally when I visited Aceh earlier in the year. The EU-Asean format has proved its worth, and we are now in a position to build on this experience and preserve AMM as a possible model for the future.

The AMM efforts at helping to solve the conflict in Aceh fit into the EU's broader policy context of strengthening security and stability in the world. Global threats, global markets and global media mean that security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. By working closely together, we can meet the security challenges of our time: international terrorism, transnational crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and violent religious extremism.

Our approach to crisis management has greatly benefited from cooperation with regional partners who ensure sensitivity to and respect for local conditions, circumstances and cultures. With this approach, the EU is aiming to become a global player, not a superpower. Through its political and economic weight, its resources and its shared values, it hopes to contribute to a safer world.

In Aceh the EU, together with its Asian partners, with the government of Indonesia and with GAM, has been able to do just that. As we mark the conclusion of the AMM operation, we can all be proud of our contribution to the peace efforts. Those who have suffered 30 years of conflict deserve no less.

Javier Solana is the European Union's high representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Leaving to live

YOUNG BLOOD

Lorrima C. de Dios

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

DEAR CLASSMATES,

A week has now passed since that fateful day I vanished from class. I sincerely apologize for all the unnecessary worry it brought you, and I would furthermore like to express my most heartfelt gratitude for all the messages of concern that you sent me. I know I did not offer any concrete reason for my sudden disappearance despite your many questions, but I did promise an explanation. You hold it now in your hands.

I suppose you're wondering why I'm being so old-fashioned that I'm writing you this letter instead of just explaining everything face-to-face when we see each other in class. The answer is quite simple: I won't be coming back to class. Not on Monday or the day after that and all the rest of the days that follow the day after Monday. Yep, it's true, I'm dropping out of medical school. (Do I hear people gasping now?)

Why? You ask. I'm afraid that question is not easy to answer. I've been deliberating all week whether I should tell the truth, be as vague as possible, or just tell an outright lie that you would all willingly believe. In all honesty, I wanted to be as vague as possible, but then I realized that vagueness would only breed gossip, and I don't want to leave med school with the thought that people might be speaking falsehoods about me when I'm no longer there to defend myself. I don't want to invent a cock-and-bull story either, because I know that none of you deserve to be lied to. So I suppose I shall stick to the truth.

Therefore, to answer your question: Why am I leaving? I'm leaving for the same reason anyone leaves, which is, because I don't want to stay. Quite simple really.

I know most of you would now be saying or would want to say, "*Sayang ang pera! Sayang ang pagod at puyat! Sayang ang panahon! Sayang, sayang, sayang! Konting tiis na lang! Tapusin mo na!*"

If that is indeed what you want to say or are planning to say, please don't say it. You would only waste your saliva because I've already recited that mantra to myself over and over again for the past two years and it's all worn out by now, all its meaning lost. To others, it might indeed seem like years wasted if I don't see it through until clerkship at the very least. But to me, it would be an even bigger waste if I spent more years doing something I know I don't like and I know I will never like, no matter how hard I force myself to like it. If I were to stay, then I would only be resigning myself to a life I could never fully enjoy: a life I'm just settling for because I don't want to bother looking for something better. In my book, a life that I'm merely settling for is only a life half-lived, and that is no life at all.

Yes, I know I wasted my mom's money and that is what I regret most, but I'm fortunate to have a very wise and understanding mother: "Money lost can be re-earned, but life wasted can never be re-lived."

I suppose your next question would be: Why now? Why only now when we are already in third year?

I have only this answer: I wasn't blessed with the gift of foresight. Realization doesn't come to us before an event happens—we have to live through it first. And only then do we find the answer. Also because courage doesn't necessarily obey once called to task, sometimes it has to be cajoled and coerced into cooperation. Leaving med school required a great deal of courage, for me, and therefore a good deal of cajoling and coercing had to be done. Trying to convince my courage into seeing reason took plenty of time and it's only now that I finally managed to persuade it to fully cooperate.

After all these explanations, I'm certain some of you would still ask: Are you sure? Are your really, really sure?

I can assure you that I have never been more certain in my entire life. This was not a decision made in the span of a day, or a week, or even a month. It took years of quiet contemplation and deep meditation for me to decide once and for all that it's finally time to leave.

I think I have now explained everything that I need and want to explain. I hope I was able to answer all the questions which I presumed you would ask. I guess the only thing left for me to say is that I wish all of you the very best in your studies and in your careers, but most importantly in your lives! Once you're all big-time, hot-shot, not to mention rich doctors, I hope you would still remember me and be kind enough to give me free consultation for old time's sake. Haha!

Thank you all for the many wonderful memories you have given me. You're truly some of the best people I've been lucky to have come to know, and I will miss you all very, very much.

As for me, life beckons and I must heed its call.

Lorrima C. de Dios, 24, is a third-year medical student at the University of Sto. Tomas. She plans to apply for a master's degree in English Creative Writing at the University of the Philippines in Diliman next June.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Daylight clear

"Officials concerned actually see the summits as de facto called off considering the tight schedule of national leaders in the next six months. Considering the size of the typhoon and that it passed by Sunday morning, the reason for rescheduling was difficult to understand .... (Philippine) media have reported the real reason might have been the warning of a high possibility of terrorist attacks, released not only by Britain but also by the United States, immediately before the events .... The difference between the Philippines and Vietnam, which banned the entry of people not related to the APEC Forum, was as clear as daylight."

—Akira Amari, Economy, Trade and Industry Minister of Japan, on the Philippine government's postponement of the 12th ASEAN Summit

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ABENSON

Realign pork barrel

THE PHILIPPINES IS NATURALLY PRONE TO disasters, but rising poverty and climate change are making the problem steadily worse. Despite repeated disasters, many people are too poor to leave dangerous areas. This is the gist of an article written by Karl Wilson, Agence France Press.

We hope our honorable congressmen and senators, instead of pushing for Charter change, will divert their energies not only toward helping the typhoon victims but also toward a long-lasting solution to alleviate poverty. Cha-cha can wait. Let's prioritize the most pressing problem of our country, which is poverty.

GMA has appropriated P1 billion as calamity fund. *Dapat lang*. But one big, bold move Congress can make is to realign the whole budget for pork barrel and have it spent initially in the calamity-stricken areas and for the upgrade of our weather forecasting and warning system. Let the legislators forget their own pet projects for their congressional districts and regions. Forget the constituent assembly, forget the Cha-cha. The opposition, too, should forget their quarrel with the administration. Their constituents will surely appreciate (with their votes) if they will act with dispatch by using their allocated funds to meet the needs at hand.

Who knows, by this single act of magnanimity, our forever warring politicians might yet become united for the common good.

—JOE SEGUERRA,
arreuges@yahoo.com

Uncharacteristic of De Quiros

THE MUSLIMS OF NORTHERN Mindanao condemn in the strongest terms the Nov. 27 column of Conrado de Quiros. We could not imagine that a man whom we respected so much for his balanced and intelligent views, who claimed to be an advocate of fairness and equality, and who has denounced discrimination, would go berserk at the expense of Rep. Faysah Dumarpa.

Labeling her a swine was very deplorable, inexcusable and unforgivable. What Dumarpa did in asserting her beliefs and culture made us, her fellow Muslims, very proud of her. She did not act in arrogance, contrary to how De Quiros saw her reaction. It was an act of faith. While it is true that what was done to her cannot justify murder, it did give a good reason for her, the offended party, to demand due courtesy and goodwill from the offender.

Let us not forget that Virginia Altamirano et al. assured the lady lawmaker that the dishes being served were "pork-free," while they knew fully well that it was not. So there was treachery on their part; it was an intentional act by the staff of the Shangri-la West Restaurant.

What we cannot accept was the attitude of De Quiros when he turned himself into a prosecutor and a judge depriving Dumarpa her right to due process. Instead of sowing peace, he added fuel to hostile biases.

—DATU ABDULMUQSIT COMADUG,
Vamenta, Opol,
Misamis Oriental,
Mindanao Muslim
Professionals Inc.

Unequally honored, why?

THE RECENT VICTORIES of Manny Pacquiao and Ronato Alcano in boxing and billiards, respectively, brought honor and glory to our country which is desperately in search of new heroes. With the media coverage of the events before, during and after, not to mention the monetary rewards and product endorsements; and, of course, the accolades from a grateful nation from the President on to the man on the street; and the victory parades, indeed, how sweet victory is.

However, there are also other Filipinos who have brought honor and glory to the country in their own small way and without fanfare. The high school students from Tanauan, Batangas who won the 2006 World Robot Olympiad abroad and the University of the East Choral Group that also won in an international choir competition. Unfortunately, they were not given the same media coverage, or elaborate victory parties, monetary rewards, not even a simple "thank you" from a grateful nation. But they also brought honor and glory to the country with their achievements. Why the different treatment? I wonder.

Anyway, we would like to thank the high school students from Tanauan, Batangas and the University of the East Choral Group for the honor and pride you gave me as a Filipino.

—RUBEN C. ROZAL,
49 K-9 Street, West Kamias,
Quezon City

The House as a circus, comic act

THE WAY THE MAJORITY members of the House of Representatives have been behaving as legislators, especially the way they tried to railroad Charter changes, convinced me that it is this "lower" chamber that should be abolished. Its supposedly "honorable" members have shown themselves to be without honor and dignity, whether as individuals or as a whole body. The present House members have sunk their institution to the lowest pits of moral rottenness never seen since the Marcos regime. These (gentle?)men of the House have turned the legislative process into a circus, comic act.

Abolish the lower house now! How many millions have already been spent for this chamber? Can its members account for all their expenditures? Can any of its member look straight into the eyes of every Filipino and say "I spent every cent that my office spent for a worthy project."

A great statesman once said, "My loyalty to my party ends where my duty to my country begins!" Can any of them say this with all honesty and sincerity?

—JOSE CUYA,
jlc_claret@yahoo.com

Military refutes false allegations

THIS IS A REACTION TO Patricia Evangelista's column titled "In cold blood" (PDI, 11/19/06).

Firstly, Oscar Leuterio's account, as quoted by the author, was despicably inaccurate and farcical; it was a belabored attempt to bring an issue against the military. Here are the facts:

A report from the 56IB, 7ID, Philippine Army says that on April 17, 2006, elements of the battalion encountered a group of more or less 50 fully armed members of the New People's Army in the vicinity of Sitio Bakalan, Barangay Camachin, DRT, Bulacan. A 30-minute firefight ensued, which resulted in the recovery of one M14 and four M16 rifles, binoculars, cellular phones and subversive documents. After the encounter, the troops interrogated on sight 14 civilians who were in the vicinity. All 14, unharmed, were later referred for custody and proper disposition to the barangay chair.

* I must stress that there was no such thing as a police blotter, contrary to what has been stated in the column; neither did the barangay chair, Rodrigo Valmocina, negotiate for their release. In the first place, the military never held these civilians as they were merely asked some questions, as part of regular procedure after encounters.

* It could not have been easy for Leuterio to read the marking "Camp Tecson," considering that it was dark, according to him, "around 10 that night."

* While there is indeed an airstrip inside Fort Magsaysay, it is seldom used. This immediately belies the allegation that he heard "airplanes taking off and descending," which can only be true in a busy airstrip.

* His allegation that he heard men's voices talking about going to the market in Cabanatuan is another lie. There are several wet and flea markets that cater to the needs of both the civilians and the military in the vicinity of Fort Magsaysay, making marketing sorties to Cabanatuan more expensive and impractical.

* There is only one detention cell in Fort Magsaysay and it is exclusively devoted for erring military personnel.

Secondly, the column quotes Leuterio accusing the military of committing heinous crimes. Accordingly, the truth of the matter cannot be ascertained by the sheer exercise of the "right of expression," but through judicial process where both the alleged victim and the persons he is accusing of can be heard, their positions weighed, and due process accorded to everyone concerned—as dictated in a democratic society.

Thirdly, the AFP strongly adheres to the state policy that values the dignity of every human being and guarantees full respect for human rights. While we are charged to protect the security and the territorial integrity of the country as our primordial mission, we are also concerned with protecting the human rights of every citizen, including their right to live in a peaceful and progressive society.

—BONIFACIO B. RAMOS.
lieutenant general, AFP,
commander, Nolcom

Food for thought for Pacquiao

IN HIS DEC. 6 COLUMN, Conrado de Quiros pointed out the seeming difference between Bata Reyes and Manny Pacquiao.

It is strange, to say the least, that a large chunk of the population, aside from those who placed their bets on Morales, had wished that Pacquiao would lose his third fight against Morales. I don't have an idea why such a sentiment developed. But it might help if Pacquiao takes this strange development into account while he contemplates on the idea of entering politics. There is always a limit to being a novelty. More so, if that novelty builds a P35 million mansion in the land of homeless millions. People might wish him a nice drive with his Porsche SUV, but it would be utter insensitivity for him to blindly embrace the First Gentleman and the most despised President of the Philippines as if the nation is not deeply hurting and divided largely because of them.

Indeed, the people could only accommodate so much. Notwithstanding his enormous talent inside the ring, Pacquiao, with his call for "unity," invites similar treatment accorded to the First Couple. He better be counting his blessings. And let go of the Pacman tag.

—RAFAEL J. ILUSTRE,
andysmash1988@yahoo.com

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Smith is worlds away while co-inmates party

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FANS CLUB: A woman is thrilled to get a picture of US Marine Daniel Smith jailed in the Makati City Jail. Other women reportedly go to jail to catch even a glimpse of the convict.

REM ZAMORA

COLORFUL HANDCRAFTED LANTERNS hung from the ceiling above tables laden with fruits, food packs and gifts, completing the holiday ambience at the Makati City Jail (MCJ) where inmates had gathered for a rare party.

Amid yesterday's festive mood, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, 21, seemed worlds away, closely watched by jail guards and US Embassy staff in a holding room a few meters away from the party venue.

He could not have missed hearing the inmates singing holiday tunes—a version of the traditional "Twelve Days of Christmas," Jose Mari Chan's "Christmas in our Hearts," and the somber Gary Valenciano classic, "Pasko na, Sinta Ko." Or their emotional monologues on their yearning for life outside prison walls, and their longing for the company of loved ones.

Whether Smith's wish to return to US custody will be granted, only the Court of Appeals can tell, his lawyer Jose Justiniano said.

Anything is possible

For sure, however, until the appellate court resolves a plea seeking reconsideration of his continued detention at the MCJ, Smith will stay put.

"We cannot say if we can get him out before Christmas ... Anything is possible, and that's beyond our control. Our job as lawyers is to draft and file his petition, but whether it will be granted or not, it's up to the Court of Appeals," Justiniano said.

Since Judge Benjamin Pozon dismissed Smith's request to be returned to US custody, MCJ officials had begun planning to move the soldier to another room in the 1,900-square-meter jail compound—one still separate from some 600 other inmates crammed in the jail cells.

But that was the least of the legal team's concerns.

"What's important for us is to get him out. It doesn't really matter if he is going to be moved within [the MCJ] for as long as he will not be hurt," Justiniano said.

Smith has been staying at the records section of the MCJ since he was taken there on Dec. 4, the day he was convicted of raping a Filipino woman.

Movie star

At around 11:30 a.m. yesterday, Smith's spiritual adviser, Fr. James Reuter, came to visit.

Half an hour earlier, Grace Santos, who had formed the group "Supporters of Daniel Smith," arrived and asked a jail guard to give the soldier the food she had brought.

"There are many who support him. Some have sent him teddy bears, food, chocolates, even a box of macadamia nuts. They are mostly women, some are gay ... They think of him as a movie star," said Santos, 34, who is married to a US Navy man.

"We will do this until he gets home, because I know in my heart he's going home soon. I am very positive of that," she said.

Santos has visited the MCJ daily in the last four days.

Yesterday, she handed out recopied photos of Smith bearing a short note of thanks and his signature.

It is not certain whether the photo was taken inside the jail, but Santos was apparently guaranteed that "it's a recent photo."

Sympathy

Justiniano said Smith would smile when told that strangers had come up to his lawyers to express sympathy for him.

"He is very happy that people send him things. Some have even sent him money. It lightens his spirit to hear about the amount of support he's been getting," the lawyer said.

Justiniano said Smith's family from St. Louis, Missouri, was planning to come to the Philippines soon.

He said Smith's mother, a nurse, and father, a firefighter, were still raising money for airfare.

Salonga to defend Pozon ruling

From page A1

sovereign states, especially the United States."

Tañada, too

Salonga and former Sen. Wigberto Tañada will represent the lawyers' groups Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan in the intervention to be filed in collaboration with the University of the Philippines Institute for International Legal Studies (IILS) before the appellate court.

"We agree with the decision of Judge Pozon from the viewpoint of public international law and from the viewpoint of the Constitutions of the Philippines and of the United States," Salonga told the INQUIRER.

"I, as founder and coordinator of Kilosbayan and its sister organization Bantay Katarungan, will uphold and defend the decision of Judge Pozon whether in the Court of Appeals or in the Supreme Court," he said.

The motion to intervene has been finalized and will likely be filed on Monday, according to Harry Roque, a UP law professor and a member of the UP IILS.

Mutual Defense Treaty

Salonga said that in arguing for Smith's detention in a Philippine jail following his rape conviction, the interveners would go beyond the legal basis cited by Pozon in his decision.

"The preamble [of the VFA] says that the United States and the Philippines have obligations under the Mutual Defense Treaty of Aug. 30, 1951. The MDT is the basis for the VFA," Salonga said.

"In this case, [the MDT] is not applicable. It applies only when the United States or the Philippines is under attack by an external power. As for the United States, it is the one that attacked Iraq," he said.

On Dec. 4, Pozon convicted Smith of raping a Filipino woman known as "Nicole" in November 2005, and ordered that he be detained at the MCJ.

Citing the VFA, which protects US troops engaged in military exercises with Philippine forces, Smith's lawyers subsequently asked that he be returned to and remain in US custody for the duration of the judicial proceedings. The US Embassy and the DFA and Department of Justice concurred in the position.

But the judge rejected this on Dec. 13, saying US custody of the soldier was "terminated after the completion of the trial and rendition of the judgment of conviction."

Smith's lawyers have raised the custody issue to the appellate court.

Asked to comment on Smith's position that the judicial process had yet to end pending the disposition of his appeal and, thus, he had to remain in US custody, Salonga said the legal arguments should not even reach that far.

"What is there to talk about? The basis is already wrong," he said in reference to the fact that neither the United States nor the Philippines was under external threat.

Salonga said that contrary to the VFA, American troops had become "permanent fixtures" at the former US military bases at Clark in Pampanga and Subic in Zambales.

"During the debates on the ratification of the VFA, we were assured that the visits [of US troops] would be temporary and would last only for a few days. Now we know better," he said.

Paragraph 4 of the VFA preamble even states that the visits will be "from time to time," he pointed out.

"In our view, the VFA should have been ratified by the United States. In US constitutional law, an executive agreement is not a treaty. It does not have the stature of a treaty that binds all the departments and agencies of the government," said Salonga, who holds a master's degree and a doctorate in law from Harvard and Yale universities in the United States.

Imperative adherence

The 16-page petition in intervention filed by the OSG in behalf of the DFA read in part: "The government's adherence to its treaty commitments is truly imperative. Any act of derogation therefrom will markedly diminish our credibility as a member of the international community.

"The grave and irreparable damage that the government and the Filipino people will suffer as a result thereof is totally incapable of pecuniary estimation."

The document was also signed by Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis as petitioner-intervenor.

The petition contended that Judge Pozon "gravely abused his jurisdiction when he unilaterally revoked the custody of the US authorities over Smith despite the judicial proceedings against him."

The DFA action officially put the government in support of what was earlier Smith's private initiative to ask the appellate court to nullify Pozon's Dec. 13 order keeping him at the MCJ.

"Contrary to the allegation of some quarters, the people's vigorous prosecution of the criminal case (rape case) does not conflict with the government's correlative duty to faithfully comply with its treaty obligations which equally form part of the laws of the land," the petition said.

"Without distinction, without discrimination and without fear and favor, all laws of the land including our treaty obligations should be enforced with the same degree of vigor," it said.

It also said Pozon "exceeded his jurisdiction" and "engaged in judicial legislation" when he went beyond the criminal case to issues arising from the application of the VFA regarding custody.

It's about time

Said Roque of his participation in the Salonga-Tañada motion: "The [OSG] would not handle Nicole's case. Normally, it's the OSG that defends the decision of a judge. It's about time somebody from the government intervened."

Roque and other lawyers—Raul Pangalangan, former dean of the College of Law and a columnist of the INQUIRER, and Florin Hilbay, a professor of constitutional law at UP—are part of the legal team that worked on the motion.

"Our intervention will still be in behalf of Nicole. We've always been helping her and her lawyer, Evalyn Ursua," he said, adding that the motion would also be in defense of Pozon's decision.

According to Roque, an expert in international law, an international treaty has no effect if it infringes on the power of the local judiciary.

But lawmakers belonging to the ruling Lakas party—Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan and Isabela Rep. Edwin Uy—insisted that Smith should be returned to US custody.

Uy, chair of the House committee on bases conversion and development, said the issue involved, not just custody of an American who had violated Philippine laws, but an agreement between the Philippines and the United States that, if not fulfilled, would "certainly strain the relationship of two allies."

"Let's also look into what the DOJ is saying, that other countries may also start to doubt whether we can keep our part of the agreements we would enter into," he said.

VFA commitment

Libanan, vice chair of the House committee on justice, said the DOJ intervention in Smith's custody petition at the appellate court did not mean that government prosecutors would serve as lawyers for the soldier or the United States.

"They will just argue about the Philippines' commitment under the VFA," he said. *With a report from Philip C. Tubeza*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 16, 2006
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading: **Sir 48:1-4, 9-11**
Gospel: **Matthew 17:9, 10-13**

As they were coming down the mountainside, the disciples then asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah must come first?" And Jesus answered, "So it is: first comes Elijah to set everything as it has to be. But I tell you, Elijah has already come and they did not recognize him, but treated him as they pleased. And they will also make the Son of Man suffer."

Then the disciples understood that Jesus was referring to John the Baptist.

Commentary

We are given a glimpse of the prophet Elijah, his fire, power, zeal, passion and disappearance in a chariot with fiery horses in the whirlwind. He is destined to reappear and turn the hearts of generations back to one another, bringing a foundation to those who wait. Blessed are those who see that time, and see him! Jesus proclaims to his disciples that John the Baptizer is indeed Elijah returned to the people, but everyone missed him again. And they will miss Jesus too, and he, the Son of Justice, the Son of Man will suffer in the tradition of all the prophets—missed and ignored. It is Advent and the Son of Man is among us. Have we missed his presence among us once again?

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Chinese Chorale Recitation Contest 2006
Sponsor: Taiwan Count's Cultural and Economic Association
First Placers: **Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 5, Grade 6**
Second Placers: **Grade 3, Grade 4**

Chinese Singing Contest
Sponsor: Hai Tian Association
First Placers: **Richard Tee, Seanne Ng, Nicole Chiang**
Second Placers: **Janeena Chan, Pia Ang Ngo Ching**
Third Placer: **Patricia Ang Ngo Ching**

Chinese Singing Contest 2006 (Prep Division)
First Placer: **Allysa Marie T. Yu**
Second Placer: **Christian Hamill L. Dee**
Third Placer: **Kiefer Matthew Lao**

SIPNAYAN Mathemathics Challenge 2006 Ateneo
Highest Scorer: **Carmela Lao**
First Placers - **Vance Go, Keefe Tan, Carmela Lao**

Young Engineer's Quiz 2006, UST
First Placers: **Jonathan Chua, Annabellee Chua, Tiffany Lim, Kristel Tanhui**

3rd Nicanor Reyes Mind Challenge 2006 (Junior Division)
Champion: **Jonathan Chua, Annabelle Chua**

3rd Nicanor Reyes On-the-Spot Essay Writting Contest 2006
Champion: **Tiffany Lim**

On-the-Spot Drawing Contest 2006
First Placer: **Sharmaine Desiree Ko Ng**

Europe Ko'To 2006
Grand Champion: **Vicente Tiu Tangececo**

Children's Art Contest 2006
First Placer (National Winner): **Hana Richelle T. Tan**

Palarong Pambansa 2006 Swimming
Gold Medalist: 4x50 m medley - **SJCS Team**
Silver Medalist: 100m Freestyle/Breaststroke - **Myke Wong**

Metropolitan Amateur Sports Association
Champion: **Badminton Team, Chess Team**
First Runner-up : **Basketball Team, Table Tennis Team**

Milo Club Gymnastica Friendship Meet
Silver Medalist: **Janeena Regine Chan**

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

[illegible]

Canadian Mathematics Competition 2006
Perfect Scorer: **Carmela Lao**
Silver - Fryer Division: **Vance Mikhail Uy**
Bronze - Fryer Division: **Patrick Adrian Ong**

10th Po Leung Kuk Primary World Math Olympiad in Hong Kong
Silver Medalists: **Carmela Lao, Vance Go**

China Primary School Mathematical Olympiad 2006
Bronze Medalists: **Mikaela Uy, Seanne Ng**

Indonesia Elementary Math International
Silver Medalist: **Audrey Lao**
Bronze Medalist: **Keefe Tan**

Science International Competitions and Assessment for Schools Educational Assessment 2006, Australia
High Distinction Awardees: **Czarina Lao, Ava Celeste Lao, Carmela Lao, Anne Rachel See, Janssen Chan**

7th Invitational World Youth Mathematics Intercity, China
First Placer - Team Competition: **Jonathan Aldric Chua**
Honorable Mention: **Patrick Ong, Jonathan Chua, Vance Uy**

The Peace Cup Youngsters Painting and Calligraphy International Allied Exhibition 2006 China and Singapore
Special Gold Medalists: **Jonathan Chua, Kyle Meguizo, Sharmayne Ng**
Gold Medalists: **Juan Chua, Pamela Chua, Erika Uy, Anne Ong Lopez, Edward Choi Jr.**
Silver Medalists: **Kimberly Tan Afuan, Kristina Ang, Arvin Layson, Dianne Dy, Andrea Dee, Pamela Ang Ngo Ching, Sharmaine Go**
Bronze Medalists: **Carmela Lao, Audrey Lao**

Federation of Overseas Chinese Association Calligraphy Drawing Contest
Silver Medalists: **Kimberly Tan Afuan and Kyle Meguizo**
Bronze Medalist: **Jonathan Chua and Sharmayne Ng**
Special Award: **Sharmayne Ng**
Special Awardees: **Andrea Dee, Pamela Ang Ngo Ching, Sharmaine Go, Carmela Lao, Johanna Go, Juan Chua, Dianne Dy, Pamela Chua, Anne Ching, Erika Uy**

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Trillanes signs up with Friendster, is hacked

From page A1

mutiny, has opened a Friendster account, according to a source close to him.

Friendster is an Internet social network service with some 36 million subscribers worldwide, generally between the ages of 21 to 30.

The rebel soldier turned senatorial aspirant has gone online so he can reach out to potential supporters and voters, should he indeed run in next year's midterm Senate elections.

But a fake Friendster account under the name "Trillanes" was put up portraying the Navy officer as someone whose hobbies include launching coup d'etats, and lists his favorite TV shows as "WWE Raw" and "Powerpuff Girls." The fake account posted a photo of Trillanes taken from television footage.

In Trillanes' real account (http://www.friendster.com/35631999), the AFP soldier describes himself as "fun-loving, friendly, [a] gentleman and romantic."

His hobbies include tennis, badminton, chess, basketball, malling with my family and watching movies.

He lists his favorite movies: "Jerry Maguire," which starred Tom Cruise as a sports agent in mid-life crisis, "Platoon" a film on the Vietnam war and "Master and Commander," which featured Russell Crowe as a ship captain during the Napoleonic wars who sails across two oceans to intercept and capture his foe.

Trillanes has a blog where he tells the public about the alleged government conspiracy behind the string of bombings in Mindanao in early 2003.

26 friends

Since Trillanes is detained at a Marines custodial facility in Fort Bonifacio with other alleged mutineers, his "campaign people" decided to open a Friendster account for him.

The account was activated several days before Trillanes registered as a voter in his home district in Caloocan City on Dec. 10.

At the beginning, he reportedly had reservations since he was not familiar with Friendster.

"The Internet is something new to him. He learned about Friendster while in detention," the source said.

Trillanes' friends explained to him that through Friendster, he could touch base with the Internet crowd "so they could get to know him and so that he can get his message across."

As of Friday, Trillanes had 26 "friends" in his Friendster network.

Exposé

The account contains the full text of Trillanes' article called "The Greenbase Exposé" which argues that the military, upon Malacañang's orders, was behind the string of bombings in Mindanao in early 2003. However, the incidents were blamed on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In the exposé, Trillanes rues that the grievances (corruption in the military and government) he and about 300 Magdalo junior officers and soldiers raised during the Oakwood mutiny, went largely ignored.

Three years after the mutiny, Trillanes and 96 other rebel junior officers have yet to be arraigned before a court martial where they had been charged with mutiny and conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

Profile

In his Friendster profile, Trillanes has written "Magdalo" as his affiliation and "AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) officer" as his occupation.

There is a close-up photo of a smiling Trillanes with the Philippine flag behind him, along with photos of his registration in the Commission on Elections office last Sunday.

His favorite books include "American Caesar," a biography of legendary US General Douglas MacArthur by William Manchester and novels by action-suspense writers Robert Ludlum and Frederick Forsyth.

THE PRESIDENT is prayed over by the Most Rev. Antonio Palang, Vicar Apostolic of Mindoro, who's seeking help for his province just as badly damaged as Albay. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

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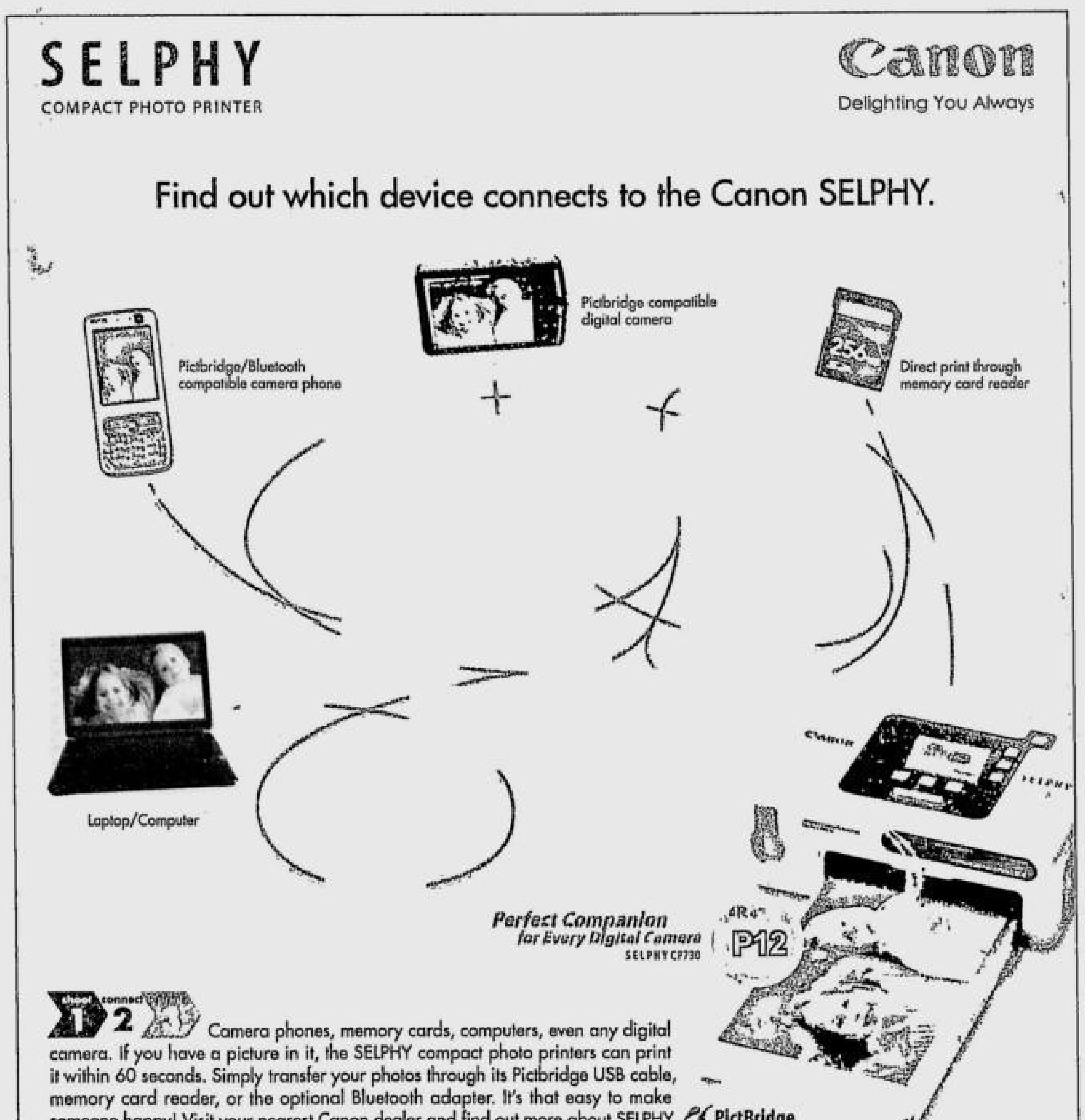

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Asean leaders confirm they're coming in Jan.

From page A1

for the postponement was the typhoon.

He said that the decision, which was arrived at after consultations with senior officials of the other Asean members who were already in Cebu City, had been justified by subsequent events.

No danger

Summit spokesperson Victor Lecaros said the fact that a majority of Asean leaders have confirmed their attendance in the rescheduled summit in January proved that there was no danger of a terror attack in the Philippines.

He said he could not name the leaders who have confirmed their attendance, explaining that protocol required that the announcement be made either simultaneously with the Philippines or by the individual governments themselves.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono "will [attend], but we will announce it in time," his spokesman Dino Patti Djalal told Agence France Presse in Jakarta earlier this week.

Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont is to join Ms Arroyo on the new summit date, government spokesperson Yongyuth Mayalarp said in Bangkok.

Malaysian Premier Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was also expected to attend, as will Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, spokespersons for their respective governments told Agence France Presse.

Japanese media reports said Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was finalizing his schedule to attend the East Asia summit, which joins the 10 Asean nations and the six dialogue partners and is held in conjunction with the Asean summit.

In the week following the postponement of the meeting, Lecaros has had his hands full trying to dispel persistent speculation about the real reason for the cancellation.

Advisories not new

During a visit to the INQUIRER office late Thursday, Lecaros said the warning of terror threats by the US, the UK and Australia were nothing new.

"They've done that before and they'll do it again, it is something they have to say because that's how they read the situation," said Lecaros, who is also the country's ambassador to Malaysia.

"Of course the reading of the situation of the people on the ground is different. That's (the US travel advisory) probably an assessment made by an analyst working in a small cubicle in the State Department, reading reports from several sources and making a conclusion," he said.

'More exciting'

As to why the speculations refuse to die down, Lecaros said: "Let's face it. The terror angle is more exciting. That's the only reason I could think of for those people who believe it... But I was in the room when the organizers were discussing the situation. And the supposed terrorism threat was never brought up. It was only the weather."

He said that as the host, the Philippines had to ensure the safety of its guests.

While the weather bureau said that Typhoon "Seniang" had veered toward northern Cebu and would not directly hit the summit site, Lecaros said the government could not afford to be "blasé."

The summit organizers took into consideration the fact that the heads of state who would be attending the summits could find themselves in the typhoon's path as they made their flights to the Philippines, he said.

Emergency landing

"Can you imagine them having to make an emergency landing somewhere else because of the bad weather here?" Lecaros said.

To gamble on the lives of the heads of state, he stressed, "would be a *faux pas* of the highest order."

"We could be assailed for being irresponsible," Lecaros said.

"A typhoon is a fearsome thing. For us Filipinos, a typhoon could be ordinary but in other countries, they don't experience typhoons as strong as we do here. It's different for them," he said.

"The weather itself was sufficient reason to postpone the summit."

Anatomy of a rumor

The Department of Foreign Affairs also released yesterday a commentary on the issue written by Lecaros titled "Anatomy of a Rumor Taking on a Life of its Own."

"The Nazi propagandist (Joseph) Goebbels was right. Repeat anything often enough and it will sound like the truth. And enough people would only be too willing to believe it," Lecaros wrote

"What was a simple necessity brought on by adverse weather has now taken on the proportions of a conspiracy worthy of suspense-novelist Robert Ludlum," he said.

"Truth is, the only real cause was that blandest of all conversational topics in everyday life: The weather. Admittedly, it is one topic that is not exciting at all," he said.

Chic to be skeptic

Lecaros recalled that it was during the press conference where the postponement of the meeting was announced that "someone on the floor raised the possibility that the weather may not have been the determining factor in the postponement."

He said it was the first time that officials conducting the briefing heard that particular "spin."

"Prior to that, the thought of a terrorist attack didn't cross our minds, and the word itself never escaped anyone's lips earlier. It has since become quite chic to express doubt and skepticism about the real cause of the postponement," Lecaros said. *AFP with Nikko Dizon and Volt Contreras*

World's tallest saves 2 dolphins

From page A1

covering well, Xinhua said.

Bao, 55, reached his height in a seven-year growth spurt that began in his teens and which doctors cannot explain, according to Guinness. After a career in the army, where he was recruited for a basketball team, he returned to Inner Mongolia where he hires himself out for publicity stunts in addition to herding livestock. *Reuters*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER A19

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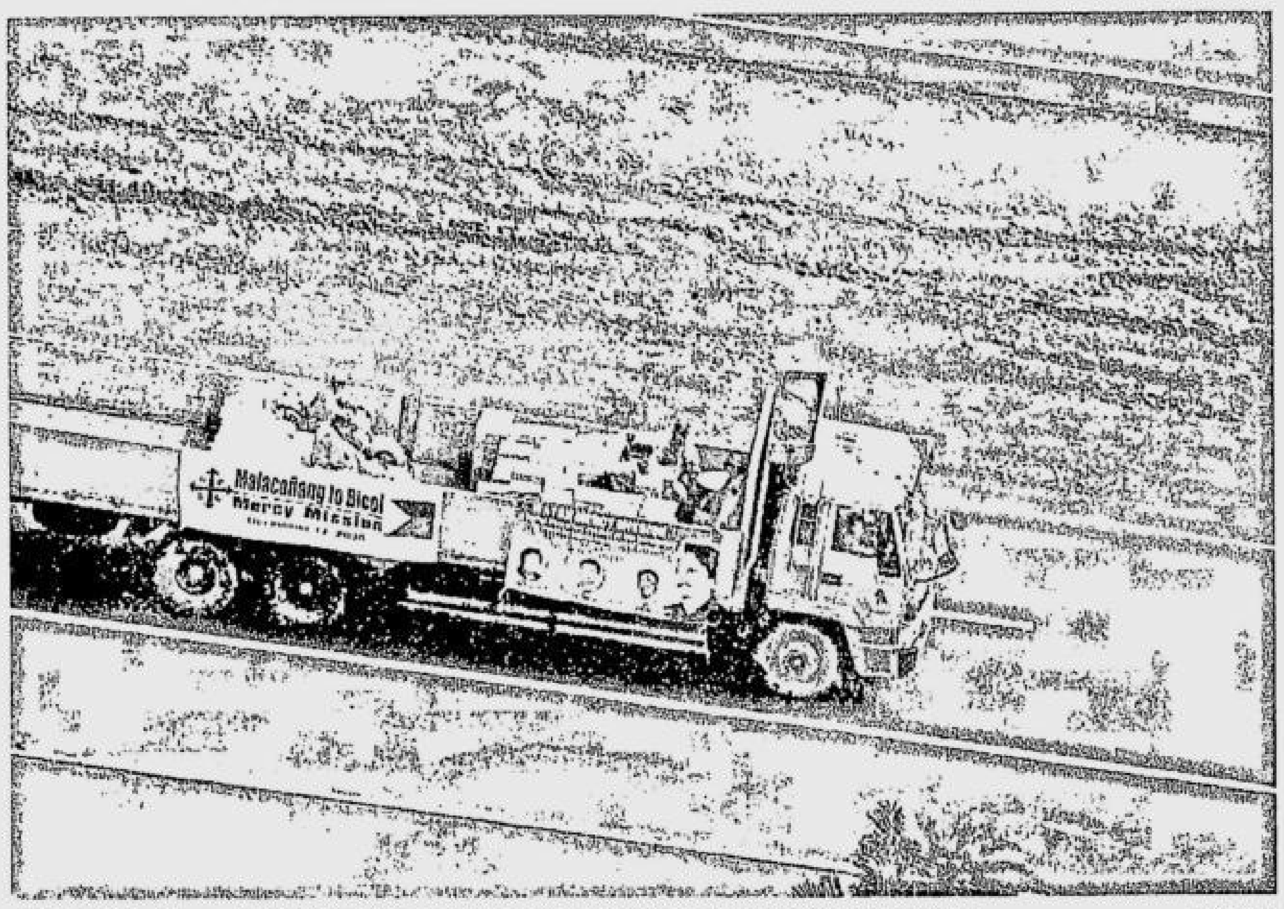
Relief caravan brought down bridge


A TRUCK that is part of a 250-vehicle caravan carrying relief goods makes its way to Albay. JESS YUSON

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE UNPRECEDENTED, MALACAÑANG-LED RELIEF MISSION TO Albay has brought down a key bridge leading to thousands of typhoon victims in the province.

The Traversia Bridge on Daang Maharlika Highway in Guinobatan town collapsed after the Malacañang Mercy Mission, a convoy of some 250 trucks and vans carrying around P200 million worth of relief goods, passed by, according to the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The mission also included doctors and construction workers to assist in the region where around 1,500 people were either left dead or missing by Supertyphoon Reming more than two weeks ago.

Fortunately for Albay, the province hit heaviest, a Bailey Bridge was soon completed to accommodate light vehicles, Orlando Roces, DPWH Bicol director, said in a statement yesterday.

Such a bridge, which refers to the type that can be assembled quickly, was finished by 4 p.m. Thursday.

"The old Traversia Bridge collapsed because of the influx ... of trucks loaded with relief goods and construction materials to be delivered in disaster areas in Albay," he said.

"It is very important for strict monitoring to assure that the same incident will never happen again in the temporary Bailey Bridge."

Since the new bridge could accommodate only light vehicles, the DPWH advised heavy ones to take the Guinobatan-Tandarora-Tagaytay-Camalig road.

As of yesterday, the DPWH said the Tobgon Bridge on Ligao-Tabaco road and the Mayon Park Road were still impassable. Motorists were advised to take the Polangui-Nasisi Provincial road as an alternate route for Tobgon Bridge.

Albay and Camarines Sur were the biggest beneficiaries of the relief goods, according to officials.

Evelyn Jerusalem, public information officer of the Department of Social Welfare and Development-Bicol, said the agency was now ensuring the immediate release of the relief assistance to the intended recipients.

The DSWD has recorded 2.6 million persons, or 506,869 families in 2,135 villages in Bicol, that had been displaced by Reming, over a million of which came from Albay.

Jerusalem said the caravan carried food items like canned goods; milk for children; medicines; distilled water and non-food items. *With a report from Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Peasant leader, 3 others survive attack by gunmen

DAVAO CITY—A PEASANT LEADER based in Compostela Valley survived an ambush staged by unidentified gunmen early yesterday in Compostela town, a militant group reported.

The attack occurred four days after the Melo Commission, which was created to investigate extra-judicial killings targeting progressive individuals in the country, held a hearing here.

Human rights group Karapatan Southern Mindanao said the 42-year-old Vicente Barrios, chair of the United Workers of Suyafa Farms, was walking on his way to work, along with three others, when waylaid in Crossing Alegra around 5 a.m.

"The incident happened while the victims were on their way to work at the Fresh Banana Agricultural Corp. packing plant 90," Kelly Delgado, secretary general of Karapatan in the region, said.

FBAC is a company owned by the Andres Soriano group and is involved in a dispute with its workers.

Barrios, Aldrin Cortez, 35; Donie Glen Sondon, 24; and Jerson Lastimoso, 26, suffered varying degrees of injuries in the attack, she said.

Delgado said Lastimoso and Cortez were in critical condition and were being treated in a government hospital.

Based on reports reaching the Compostela police, the suspects were riding a motorcycle and used an "unknown caliber" in shooting the victims.

"We are still investigating," PO3 Romeo Gerundio, a police investigator, said when asked about the possible motive.

Delgado said the attempt on Barrios' life was only among the "series of harassment, grave threat, and intimidation of union leaders and members, particularly in banana plantations in Compostela."

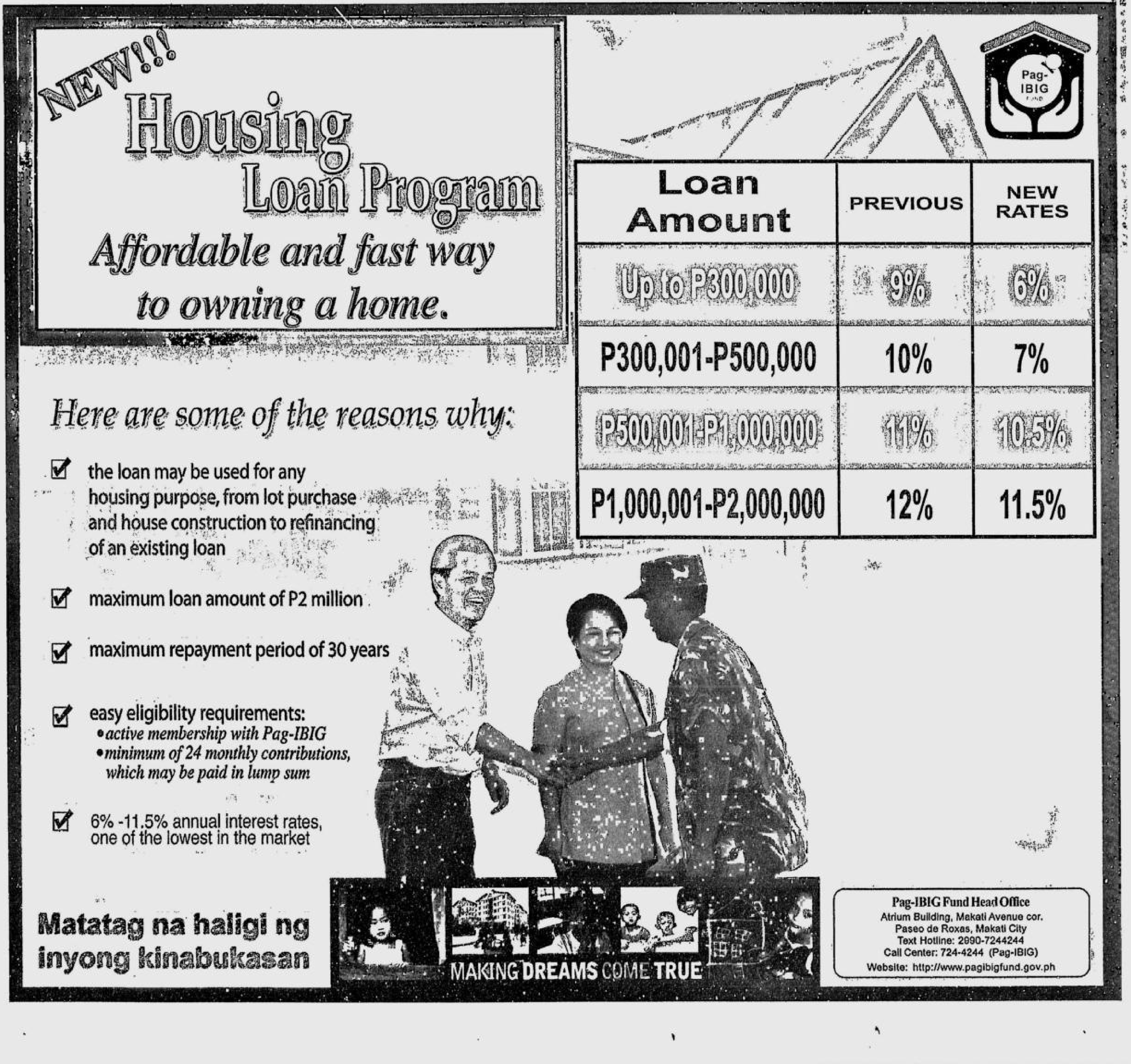
Delgado said prior to the ambush, Barrios has already been receiving threats particularly after his group filed a money claim last year against FBAC for non-payment of cost of living allowance (Cola), holiday pay, service incentive, and non-wage benefits.

She said in June, an armed man barged into Barrios' house in Barangay Alegra in Compostela. *Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

ERRATUM

The Pag-IBIG Fund wishes to correct the rates printed in the advertisement on its amended housing loan program, as follows:

- Interest rate of 10.5% is applicable on loan packages of P500,001 to P1,000,000 (and not P750,000).
- Loan packages of P1,000,001 (and not P750,001) to P2,000,000 has an interest of 11.5%.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Baguio execs prepare for closure of dump

BAGUIO CITY—WITH THE COMPLETION of the city's solid waste management plan, local officials have started preparing for the eventual closure of the city's dumpsite in compliance with the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (Republic Act 9003).

Nazita Bañez, city engineer, said the city government would present next year an improved solid waste management system through the construction of a materials recovery facility (MRF) for five of 17 village clusters here.

Bañez said the local government is allotting P17 million for the solid waste management of the city's 128 villages.

She said the 17 village clusters would receive P1 million each, P750,000 of which would be used to buy bioreactors to convert biodegradable wastes to compost. The remaining amount would be used for the construction of the MRF.

Bañez said five clusters would have bioreactors in July next year, another five clusters in 2008 and seven clusters in 2009.

She said they are expecting the sanitary landfill to operate by 2009.

Bañez said an executive order is expected to be issued next month requiring villages to implement segregation of wastes.

The city government will also conduct an information campaign from January to July 2007 to educate residents on proper waste segregation, reduction and recycling.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources gave the city until February 2006 to comply with the provisions of RA 9003, which mandates the segregation and collection of wastes at source, as well as the closure of all open dumpsites and the conversion of controlled dumpsites to sanitary landfills.

Lack of funds and the absence of a new site for a sanitary landfill, however, have delayed the plans to rehabilitate the city's dumpsite at Barangay Irisan and to draw up a better solid waste management plan.

Bañez said 1.7 hectares of the Irisan dumpsite would have to be used as an interim disposal facility until the completion of a sanitary landfill.

"By 2009, Irisan will be closed permanently. It is assumed that by then, the facilities will be completed," she said. *Donna Demetillo, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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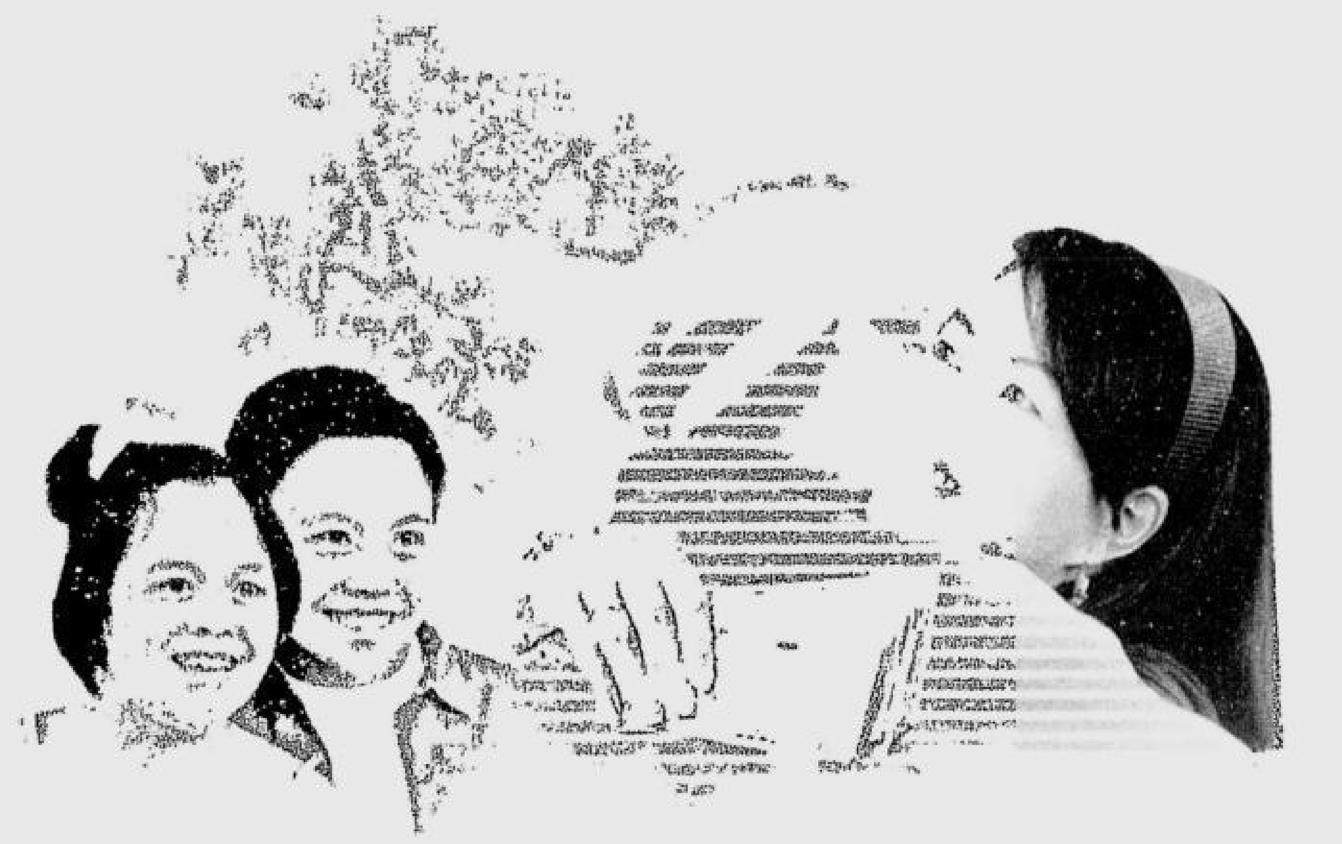
Children enjoy playing in the morning sun on the shores of Bauang, La Union with their favorite pet.
TOOTS SOBERANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON



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Men of Misuari helping in war on Sayyaf, JI

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Forces loyal to Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) chair Nur Misuari have started joining soldiers in actual combat operations against the Abu Sayyaf and operatives of the Jemaah Islamiyah in Sulu, military commanders said.

Marine Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, who also heads the government's Ad-Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG), said the participation of MNLF forces under commander Ustadz Habier Malik and another MNLF commander was seen to speed up the manhunt against Abu Sayyaf bandits led by Khadaffy Janjalani, Jainal Antel Sali, Isnilon Hapilon and Radulan Sahiron, and Indonesian bomb experts Dulmatin and Omar Patek.

MORO Islamic Liberation Front combatant patrols Tapikan 2 Village in Shariff Aguak town in Maguindanao, a stronghold of the MILF.
JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO

The MNLF signed a final peace pact in 1996 but its forces, particularly in Sulu, have often clashed with soldiers.

The military had accused them of coddling or working with Abu Sayyaf bandits but the allegation was denied by local MNLF leaders.

In May, Dolorfino worked out an agreement that would end the hostilities between soldiers and the MNLF in Sulu.

"They are now actively involved in the actual military operations and very soon, with their cooperation, we can get these local and foreign terrorists," Dolorfino said.

He said the latest operation involving MNLF combatants was the one conducted in the town of Kalinggalang Caluang. He did not specify when the operation was conducted but said it was successful.

Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban, commander of the 3rd Marine Brigade based in Sulu, said that previously, MNLF combatants only provided information to the military.

"Today, in certain military operations, they join our troops and we welcome this arrangement. It's better to have the MNLF on our side because they are very reactive and supportive," Sabban said.

He said to maximize the participation of the MNLF in the area, MNLF commanders also join planning sessions on operations.

While the operation in Sulu was being conducted, the military said it has been receiving reports that the so-called high-value targets were no longer on the island-province.

Maj. Eugene Batara, spokesperson for the military's Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), told reporters there were pieces of information the "high-value targets have already fled to the Lanao areas."

But Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police chief, told the INQUIRER they have not received information about ranking Abu Sayyaf leaders or JI operatives in Lanao del Sur.

"They are not in Lanao del Sur. Who will keep them there? Muslim rebels ... the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will not allow it," Goltiao said.

Even the MILF, which is talking peace with the government, said it has not monitored the presence of terrorists in the two Lanao provinces.

"We are monitoring but there are no signs. If they are in the area, we can allow military operations and we will also help," Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, said.

The MILF has agreed to cooperate in the government's anti-terror drive to boost the peace process.

Meanwhile, Goltiao said Indonesian and Filipino security forces have stepped-up cooperation against criminals, including terrorists, particularly on the aspect of joint training and conduct of patrols.

"Those (assigned) in the program will watch the shores to neutralize smugglers, illegal fishers and terrorists like the Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah militants," Goltiao said. *Julie Alipala and Jeffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

INQUIRER Visayas

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Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Winning methods to fight corruption

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

WHILE MANY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND national government agencies are mired in allegations of corruption, five towns and a city in Western Visayas have been lauded for instituting safeguards to prevent public funds from lining the pockets of politicians, and for serving as models of governance.

Sagay City and the municipalities of Sibunag, Sigma, Miagao, Batad, and Bingawan were asked to share their innovative social accountability projects during the "Learning Forum on Social Accountability," organized by the World Bank Institute and the Iloilo Code NGOs on Nov. 27-29.

"The city and the towns were islands of good governance in the midst of the litany of horror stories of graft and corruption," said Emmanuel Areño, executive director of Iloilo Code.

The towns were seen as examples and innovations of good governance that are working to transform people's lives.

Common among their initiatives are the ingredients of social accountability, defined as the obligation of elected officials to account or take responsibility for their actions. These are citizens' engagement, access to information, public disclosure, assessment tools, and project continuity.

Sibunag town in Guimaras came up with an antipoverty plan in the barangays of Millan and Ayangan. With the help of Iloilo Code, the residents have mapped their communities to find out who and where the poor are, and what they need.

With the information, they lobbied with their local officials to allot funds for the poor households. They also tracked down the flow of funds to local projects and looked into how these were implemented. They scrutinized documents for leakage, the difference between budget and actual spending, and whether the beneficiaries were really the intended ones.

Vigilance dividends

Their vigilance has paid off. This year, the two barangays enjoyed a bigger share from the 20-percent development fund of the town compared to what they got in 2004. Millan's share, for example, increased to 37 percent. For every poor household in the village, Sibunag's spending has improved from P86.48 in 2004 to P172 this year.

From mostly waiting sheds and basketball courts, projects now lean toward health and livelihood. Payroll padding and diversion of project funds were checked.

Early this year, Sibunag won a P1-million grant from the World Bank during the search for innovations on good governance, also known as "Panibagong Paraan 2006." Its project to help seaweed growers was among the 57 winners chosen from some 1,200 entries.

However, when the municipal officials were about to implement the project, the oil spill, which was caused by the sinking of the tanker MT Solar I carrying bunker fuel of Petron Corp., destroyed the seaweed farms.

Sigma town in Capiz has been commended for working with NGOs and foundations. The secret, according to Mayor Roberto Sualog, is coming up with a "technology for participation."

Sualog said he invested in training barangay officials. He sent out heads of the municipal government to "sell" their services to the people. He worked closely with NGO leaders whom he admired for their commitment.

The town implemented projects with private groups, such as the Sigmahanon Development Foundation, Katibyugan-World Vision and Sigmahanon Foundation for Culture and the Arts. Among these projects are food processing, muscovado mill, mushroom farming, childcare, performing arts and the management of the municipal library, tourist and trading center.

Sualog said the participation of private and people's organizations in the local development council ensured that funds were "spent at the right time and the right place."

Less corruptible

In Sagay City in Negros Occidental, good governance was championed by the Sagay Association of Ministries for Ecumenical Endeavors (Samee), trusted by the residents because they are religious leaders and thus supposedly less corruptible.

Organized in 1997 and headed by Rev. Noel Luces, Samee sits in the city development committee, peace and order council, health board, waste management council, clean and green, protected area management board and project monitoring board, among other bodies.

It was in the latter involvement where Samee showed its teeth when it painstakingly monitored the construction of approved projects, from start to finish, checking for delays, corruption and wastage.

A public works project has to be certified complete by Samee. Among them are a P20,000 fencing of a dog pound and the construction of a P4-million city health center.

Miagao town in Iloilo organized its municipal and barangay project monitoring and evaluation committees to look into the implementation of all local and national government projects. Members of the committees were trained to use the assessment tools.

The groups have been successful in tracking projects implemented by the municipal government and the barangays, but not so with national projects, such as road building and maintenance under the Department of Public Works and Highway, said Nicolas Moragas, municipal and planning officer.

The town is only given the completion report, he said.

Transparency dialogues

Batad's contribution is its twice-a-year transparency dialogue. Local government officials and key municipal employees face the people in a no-holds-barred question-and-answer forum about their accomplishments.

MEMBERS of Sagay Association of Ministers for Ecumenical Endeavors inspect public works in Sagay City. The association monitors construction of government projects from start to finish. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ILOILO CODE NGOS

Called the "Pahayag sa Banwa" (Tell the People), the meeting updates the people of the status of current and upcoming projects. The officials consult them of what projects they want.

Preparation for the encounter takes weeks. First, drop boxes for questions are placed in the church, marketplace and town hall. Elected officials are asked to submit their accomplishment report. A committee screens the questions to make sure that these are not below the belt or astray.

The "Pahayag sa Banwa" won the Galing Pook Award. In 2005, it was made permanent through an ordinance.

Bingawan followed Batad's lead and came up with its own dialogue called the "Pamangkutanon sang Banwa" (Questions from the People).

The activity was an offshoot of voters' education, conducted by the local Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting and the Iloilo Code NGOs, in which politicians signed a covenant that when elected, they would submit themselves to a performance evaluation.

The first dialogue took place on Valentine's Day last year. Mayor Ted Peter Plagata and other officials were grilled on delays of the honorariums of day care workers, sorry state of farm-to-market roads, busted street lights, stray dogs and other issues.

This year, the meeting was organized by the Bingawan Working Youth Federation who renamed it "Kwentahan not Kwentohan" (Accountability Not Lip Service).

Checking election promises

Like Sibunag, the youth federation of Bingawan won a P1-million grant in the good governance competition. Part of its winnings went to organizing the transparency dialogue, which has also been enshrined in a municipal ordinance.

The dialogues were inspired by "Ulat sa Bayan" (Report to the People) in Albay. Elected officials are called to report to the people what they have accomplished based on their platforms of governance. During the forums, citizens ask them how the politicians fulfilled their election promises.

Because they know they are being watched, the elected officials try to deliver. Ordinary residents have also learned to face their leaders and express themselves. Others try to read up more about laws and learn about budgeting and local governance processes to ensure that public funds go where they are needed.

Areño said the transparency dialogues stimulated participation in governance. They could cure apathy and become a source of hope, he said.

He cited the Transparency International that ranked the Philippines 117th out of 146 countries with the highest perceived degree of corruption in 2005. This year, the country slid to 125th among 163 countries.

TOWNSFOLK in Sibunag, Guimaras, track down poverty incidence and government spending for antipoverty programs.

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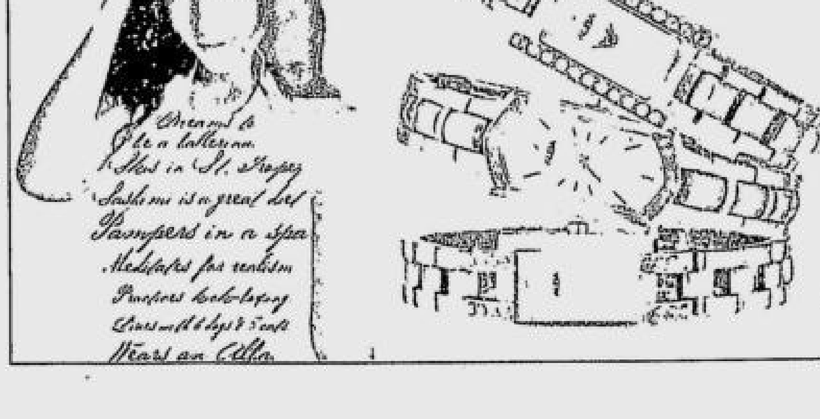

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'Seniang' cost Boracay resorts P44M, say execs

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE DAMAGES wrought by Typhoon Seniang in Boracay cost at least P44 million, according to resort owners and the tourism department.

Susan Trinidad, executive director of Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI), said the cost of damages to some structures of resorts and other businesses reached P35 million. The BFI is composed of the owners of resorts, restaurants and other businesses on the island.

This amount does not include the speedboats, yachts, and motorboats damaged or destroyed by the strong winds and big waves that hit the island on Dec. 9 and 10, Trinidad said.

At least 45 resorts incurred damages after strong winds toppled electric posts, uprooted trees and pried off loose roofings, according to a report of the Boracay Special Tourist Police Office (BST-PO). The island has more than 200 resorts, hotels, restaurants and other business establishment.

Two boat operators died at the height of the typhoon and two others remain missing.

The Department of Tourism and resort owners said the damage had "minimal effect" on tourist arrivals on the island although the BFI said it would take at least two weeks before the situation returns to normal.

Helen Camarista, DOT assistant regional director in Western Visayas, said they have received reports of cancellations of reservations for 12 rooms in two resorts.

"The resorts are still fully booked especially by *balikbayans* and foreigners who will spend their Christmas and New Year on the island," Camarista said.

Trinidad said the bulk of tourists are expected to arrive next week and the island would have mainly recovered from the effects of the typhoon by then.

However, she placed the cost of lost income due to cancellations at P2 million but she said they are still waiting for reports from their members.

But transportation between Boracay and Caticlan, the jump-off point from the Aklan mainland, is hampered because around 60 percent of boats have been damaged or missing, said Aklan Rep. Florencio Miraflores in a telephone interview.

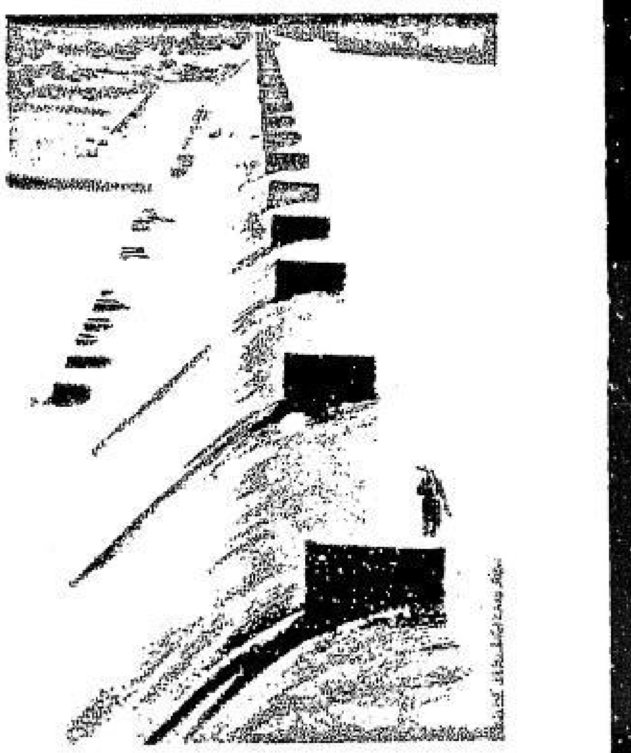
The DOT has issued an advisory that the cleanup and repair of the structures on the island would be completed in a few days.

Boracay, located in Malay town, was among the hardest hit areas of Aklan province, which has been placed under a state of calamity.

Aklan Gov. Carlito Marquez said the cost of damage to agriculture reached P254 million as of Tuesday. The worst hit areas include the towns of Ibajay, Nabas, Malay and Buruanga.

Marquez said electricity has been restored in the capital town of Kalibo and neighboring municipalities but most of Aklan are still without electricity as of Thursday.

In Caluya, Antique, the damage to infrastructure caused by Seniang reached almost P3 million. *With report from Arnold Almacen, Inquirer Visayas*



A BRIDGE spans a dam that controls the Chico River in Tabuk, Kalinga. The control of several aging dams has been turned over by private firm Hedcor to the Baguio City government. EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Firm gives up control of old dams to Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—THE ABOITIZ-owned Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor) has decided to relinquish control of four aging dams owned by the city government, ending a drawn-out legal row on their operations.

Acting Vice Mayor Leandro Yangot, who is acting mayor this week, formed a management committee to run the Asin hydroelectric plants, and to hire employees that Hedcor would retrench after its operation of the Asin plants.

The dams were constructed during the term of Baguio's last American Mayor, Eusebius James Halsema, during the 1920s, to help light up the summer capital.

They were powered by rivers crossing Barangays Tadiangan, Nagalisan and Camp 6 along Kennon Road, all in Tuba, Benguet.

The plants were originally leased to the Baguio Water District (BWD) in 1981, but the agency contracted Hedcor to operate them on their behalf.

When the 25-year lease ended in September this year, the city government allowed Hedcor to temporarily continue running the power facilities, over the BWD's objections.

Teresita de Guzman, BWD general manager, informed the city council that it violated bidding procedures if it allowed Hedcor to continue operating the plants.

Even before the contract expired, the BWD board of directors announced that it was "not inclined to renew the contract ... as the facility was no longer financially and economically viable to operate."

Hedcor also advised the city government that the facilities' lifespan is short, "although I think the city is simply being conditioned to believe the plants have less value than they really have," Yangot said.

He said the city government failed to decide the plants' future despite recommendations offered by several task forces.

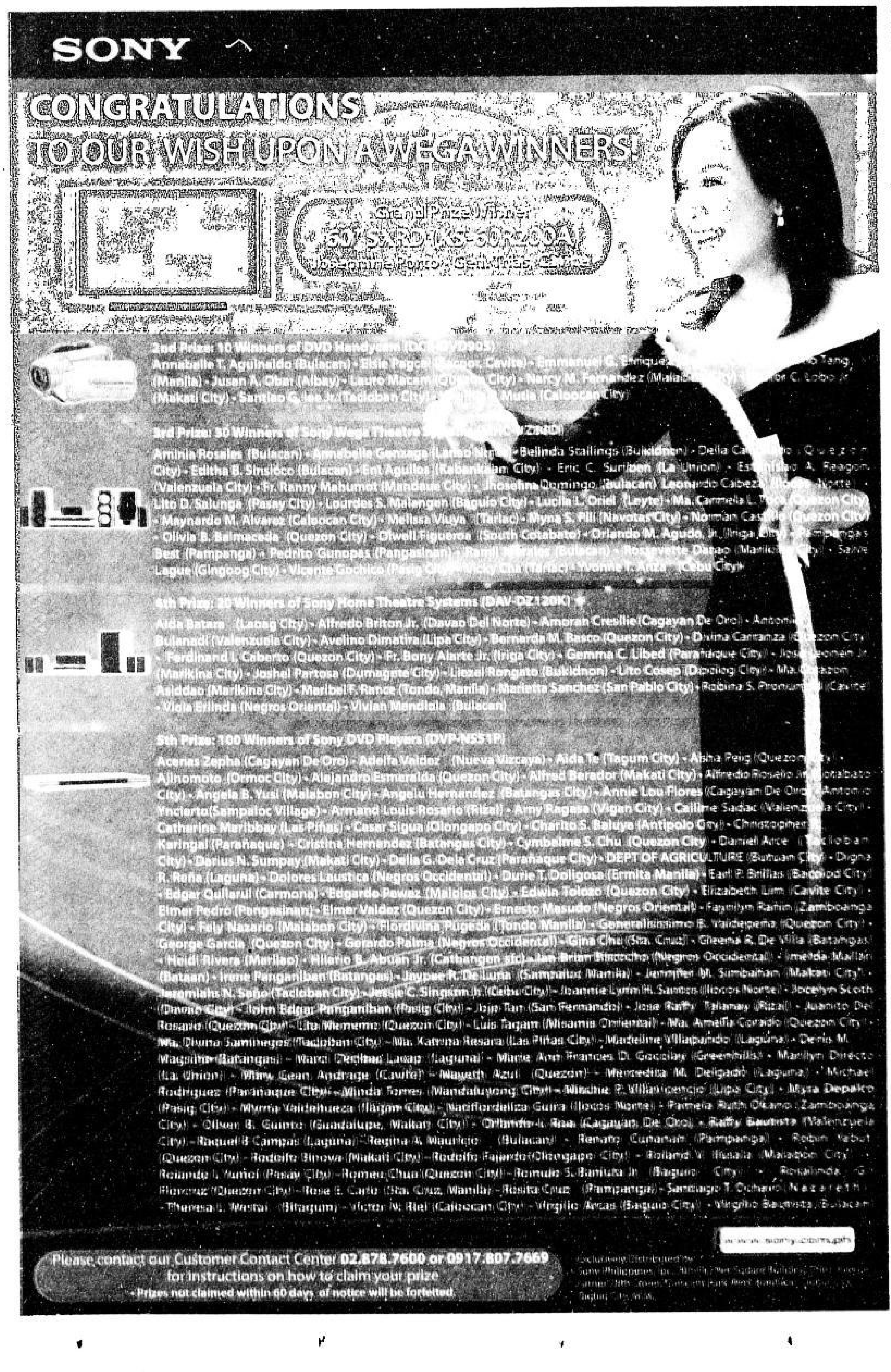
But he said officials have become sensitive to the legal predicament they now face as soon as Hedcor leaves the Asin plants.

"We don't want to go the way of Pasay City, when all officials were suspended because of technical violations. We intend to bid this city property, but we cannot allow it to shutdown," he said.

Yangot said the plants' monthly generation is equivalent to P58 million. The power they produce is sold to the Benguet Electric Cooperative (Beneco).

The city government can invest in the plants' projected P200-million upgrade but it is cash-strapped, Yangot said.

"Our option is to lease it again, but only after we resolve the legal issues [surrounding the plants' management]," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*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Aminia Rosales (Bulacan) - Annabelle Gonzaga (Lanao Norte) - Belinda Stallings (Bukidnon) - Delia Ca[illegible] (Quezon City) - Editha B. Sinsioco (Bulacan) - Ent Aguilos (Kabankalan City) - Eric C. Suriben (La Union) - Est[illegible] A. Reagon (Valenzuela City) - Fr. Ranny Mahumot (Mandaue City) - Jhosehna Domingo (Bulacan) - Leonardo Cabeza (Ilocos Norte) - Lito D. Salunga (Pasay City) - Lourdes S. Malangen (Baguio City) - Lucila L. Oriel (Leyte) - Ma. Carmela L. [illegible] (Quezon City) - Maynardo M. Alvarez (Caloocan City) - Melissa Viuya (Tarlac) - Myna S. Pili (Navotas City) - Norman Castillo (Quezon City) - Olivia B. Balmaceda (Quezon City) - Olwell Figueroa (South Cotabato) - Orlando M. Agudo, Jr. (Iriga City) - Pampangas Best (Pampanga) - Pedrito Gunopas (Pangasinan) - Ramil [illegible] (Bulacan) - Rosayette Danao (Manila City) - Salve Lague (Gingoog City) - Vicente Gochico (Pasig City) - Vicky Cha (Tarlac) - Yvonne T. Anza (Cebu City)

4th Prize: 20 Winners of Sony Home Theatre Systems (DAV-DZ120K)
Aida Batara (Laoag City) - Alfredo Briton Jr. (Davao Del Norte) - Amoran Cresilie (Cagayan De Oro) - Antonio Bulanadi (Valenzuela City) - Avelino Dimatira (Lipa City) - Bernarda M. Basco (Quezon City) - Divina Carranza (Quezon City) - Ferdinand I. Caberto (Quezon City) - Fr. Bony Alarte Jr. (Iriga City) - Gemma C. Libed (Parañaque City) - Jose Leonen Jr. (Marikina City) - Joshel Partosa (Dumaguete City) - Liezel Rongato (Bukidnon) - Lito Cosep (Dipolog City) - Ma. Corazon Asiddao (Marikina City) - Maribel F. Rance (Tondo, Manila) - Marietta Sanchez (San Pablo City) - Robina S. Pronum[illegible] (Cavite) - Viola Erlinda (Negros Oriental) - Vivian Mandiola (Bulacan)

5th Prize: 100 Winners of Sony DVD Players (DVP-NS51P)
Acenas Zepha (Cagayan De Oro) - Adelfa Valdez (Nueva Vizcaya) - Aida Te (Tagum City) - Aisha Peig (Quezon City) - Ajinomoto (Ormoc City) - Alejandro Esmeralda (Quezon City) - Alfred Berador (Makati City) - Alfredo Roselo Jr. (Cotabato City) - Angela B. Yusi (Malabon City) - Angelu Hernandez (Batangas City) - Annie Lou Flores (Cagayan De Oro) - Antonio Yncierto (Sampaloc Village) - Armand Louis Rosario (Rizal) - Amy Ragasa (Vigan City) - Calline Sadac (Valenzuela City) - Catherine Maribbay (Las Piñas) - Cesar Sigua (Olongapo City) - Charito S. Baluye (Antipolo City) - Christopher Karingal (Parañaque) - Cristina Hernandez (Batangas City) - Cymbelme S. Chu (Quezon City) - Daniel Arce (Tacloban City) - Darius N. Sumpay (Makati City) - Delia G. Dela Cruz (Parañaque City) - DEPT OF AGRICULTURE (Butuan City) - Digna R. Reña (Laguna) - Dolores Laustica (Negros Occidental) - Durie T. Doligosa (Ermita Manila) - Earl P. Brillas (Bacolod City) - Edgar Quilerul (Carmona) - Edgardo Pewaz (Malolos City) - Edwin Tolozo (Quezon City) - Elizabeth Lim (Cavite City) - Elmer Pedro (Pangasinan) - Elmer Valdez (Quezon City) - Ernesto Masudo (Negros Oriental) - Fayrilyn Rahim (Zamboanga City) - Fely Nazario (Malabon City) - Flordivina Pugeda (Tondo Manila) - Generalissimo B. Valdepeña (Quezon City) - George Garcia (Quezon City) - Gerardo Palma (Negros Occidental) - Gina Cha (Sta. Cruz) - Gleena R. De Villa (Batangas) - Heidi Rivera (Marilao) - Hilario B. Abuan Jr. (Catbangen sfc) - Ian Brian Bitoocho (Negros Occidental) - Imelda Mallari (Bataan) - Irene Panganiban (Batangas) - Jaypee R. De Luna (Sampaloc Manila) - Jennifer M. Sumbahan (Makati City) - Jeremiahs N. Saño (Tacloban City) - Jessie C. Singson Jr. (Cebu City) - Joanne Lynn H. Santos (Ilocos Norte) - Jocelyn Scoth (Davao City) - John Edgar Panganiban (Pasig City) - Jojo Tan (San Fernando) - Jose Raffy Talamay (Rizal) - Juanito Del Rosario (Quezon City) - [illegible] (Quezon City) - Luis Tagam (Misamis Oriental) - Ma. Amelia Corado (Quezon City) - Ma. Diuna Samiñegos (Tacloban City) - Ma. Katrina Rasara (Las Piñas City) - Madeline Villapando (Laguna) - Denis M. Magpilie (Batangas) - Marci [illegible] Lasap (Laguna) - Marie Ann Frances D. Gacollay (Greenhills) - Marilyn Directo (La Union) - Mary Gean Andrage (Cavite) - [illegible] Azul (Quezon) - Mercedita M. Delgado (Laguna) - Michael Rodriguez (Parañaque City) - Minda Torres (Mandaluyong City) - Minchie P. Villavicencio (Lipa City) - Myra Depalco (Pasig City) - Myrna Valdehueza (Iligan City) - Natiflordeliza Guira (Ilocos Norte) - Pamela Ruth Ocampo (Zamboanga City) - Oliver B. Guinto (Guadalupe, Makati City) - Orlando L. Roa (Cagayan De Oro) - Raffy Bautista (Valenzuela City) - Raquel B Campos (Laguna) - Regina A. Mauricio (Bulacan) - Renato Cunanan (Pampanga) - Robin Yabut (Quezon City) - Rodolfo Binova (Makati City) - Rodolfo Fajardo (Olongapo City) - Roland V. Husala (Malabon City) - Rolando I. Yuñol (Pasay City) - Romeo Chua (Quezon City) - Romulo S. Baniuta Jr. (Baguio City) - Rosalinda G. Florenz (Quezon City) - Rose E. Carlo (Sta. Cruz, Manila) - Rosita Cruz (Pampanga) - Santiago T. Ocharo (Nazareth) - Theresa L. Westal (Bitagum) - Victor N. Riel (Caloocan City) - Virgilio Arcas (Baguio City) - Virgilio Bautista (Bulacan)

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Bert Gonzales warns of leftist 'provocateurs'

By Christine O. Avendaño

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER Norberto Gonzales yesterday claimed that "communist provocateurs" were out to sabotage tomorrow's prayer rally of anti-Charter change advocates at Rizal Park, and all but asked parents to dissuade their children from attending the event.

Gonzales said he had received "credible" intelligence information that the Left would attempt to sow violence during the rally.

"Small firearms, possibly including explosives, will likely be smuggled into Metro Manila," Gonzales said in a statement.

But he said that he had already alerted both the military and the police to thwart any such attempt and to implement safety measures for the rallyists.

Appeal to parents

"I am appealing to the parents to check with the Catholic school authorities if their sons and daughters are being required to participate in Sunday's prayer rally," Gonzales said.

"If their children will be attending, I am asking them to request school authorities to ensure that their children are adequately protected and that measures are in place should trouble happen."

Gonzales said that he had also asked the Commission on Higher Education and the Department of Education to ask Catholic schools to ensure that students attending the event would be given protection.

"This may come in the form of instructions on what the students should do should trouble erupt in the rally site," he said.

Manning checkpoints

Gonzales said he had asked Armed Forces Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon Jr. to have the Northern Luzon Command and the Southern Luzon Command coordinate with the police in setting up checkpoints in thoroughfares leading to Metro Manila.

He said he also asked national police Director General Oscar Calderon to prepare his men for any eventuality.

Church: We've had it

From page A1

holding a massive prayer rally, the bishops had often been criticized for supposedly taking generally vague positions on the political problems gripping the nation.

Intervene to guide flock

Saying the CBCP had not been exactly "silent" considering the number of pastoral statements it had issued, Figura explained that it was simply giving way for democratic processes to proceed.

"But obviously, this is not what happened so the Church now has to intervene as a moral and spiritual body that would guide the people," he said.

Similar prayer rallies against Cha-cha are expected to be held in other parts of the country tomorrow.

Thanksgiving rally

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president and main organizer of the Luneta affair, yesterday said the gathering could now be turned into a prayer of "thanksgiving" considering the administration's decision to defer Charter change.

He was also referring to the different prayer rallies held yesterday in other dioceses around the country.

As of yesterday morning, he said the dioceses of Novaliches and Infanta in Quezon had completed their respective rallies. Expected to follow were northern Luzon, the four dioceses of Negros, Capiz, Iloilo, Cebu, Kidapawan, Marbel, Cotabato, Ozamiz, Digos, Malolos, Balanga and Cavite. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

"The convergence of so many institutions and groups—with the good of the country in their hearts—is a miracle of grace," Lagdameo said in a statement. "It is a religious response to a political situation. Our government needs to be prayed for."

Lagdameo reiterated his position on constitutional amendment, saying "we (still) have a number of crises to solve, together with the need for genuine electoral reform."

He said the planned constitutional convention—the administration's alternative to the scuttled Con-ass—could be "placed in the list of priorities, arranged according to importance and urgency."

"Haste must be avoided because haste makes waste," he said.

Rally guidelines

For tomorrow's rally, organizers released a two-page set of guidelines designed to keep the occasion apolitical.

Former Philippine Ambassador to the Vatican Henrietta de Villa, chief rally coordinator, said policemen had been asked to ensure that banners and placards of any sort would not get beyond Taft Avenue going to Luneta.

"Of course, we asked them to do it in a nonviolent way," she said.

De Villa said organizers were expecting at least 500,000 participants and she asked them to "shed off their identities."

The call to watch and pray is directed at "the people of God and all Filipinos of goodwill," according to the guidelines.

No room for GMA, JDV

Asked if Ms Arroyo, House Speaker Jose de Venecia, other personalities who had pushed for Cha-cha were welcome, De Villa gave a diplomatic answer.

"While we will do our best to guarantee that there will be no banners, no streamers and all of that, I'm also saying that we might not be able to contain some exuberance when they (participants) see people that they feel are the cause of the call and response," she said.

"I'm sure those people (Ms Arroyo et al.) will have the good sense not (to) provoke such disrespect to their own dignity."

Asked if she meant that it would be better for these politicians not to show up, De Villa replied: "It's up for them to interpret."

De Villa earlier told the INQUIRER that the Quirino Grandstand would be exclusively for people officiating the Mass. These would include Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, the main celebrant, and his concelebrators.

All else—including De Villa herself, Bro. Mike Velarde of El Shaddai and Bro. Eddie Villanueva of the Jesus Is Lord Movement—will be accommodated with the rest of the crowd fronting the stage.

Even if barred from mounting the stage, senators appeared to be still keen on joining the rally.

Senators will be there

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Franklin Drilon shrugged off notices from rally organizers prohibiting politicians from going up the stage and issuing political statements.

"I'll go there not because I want to climb and be recognized. I go in solidarity with the pastors of my church. I will merge faceless with the masses of our people," Pimentel said.

Magsaysay said: "I'll go there as a Filipino. I don't have to say anything. I just want to pray with the Filipino people. If you're not on the stage, there's no hassle. It's better to be lost in the crowd. We just want to be with the people."

"That's not a problem; I'll just attend the rally," Drilon said.

The three lawmakers, together with Senators Manuel "Mar" Roxas II, Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, Alfredo Lim, Luisa "Loi" Ejercito-Estrada and Jinggoy Estrada earlier said they would join former President Corazon Aquino at the rally.

Villar not going

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. indicated that he might not join the rally but said it was up to the other senators to decide on this.

"It's just right that this should not be tainted with politics. So I'll probably just forgo it and just express my support for them in some other way," Villar said. ***With reports from Dona Pazzibugan and TJ Burgonio***

Military on red alert

MILITARY TROOPS IN Metro Manila were placed on red alert' last night, two days ahead of tomorrow's planned rally against Charter change.

Brig. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, chief of the Armed Forces National Capital Region (NCRCom) said he had seven companies composed of at least 800 troops on standby in case they needed to reinforce the over 5,000 antiriot police who will be deployed at Luneta.

He said there was "no specific threat" to disrupt the rally.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. had warned that communist rebels and Islamic extremists could sabotage the gathering and put the blame on the government.

"We expect that the rally will be peaceful," Dolorfino said.

Rally flops in Makati, draws thousands . . .

From page A1

ment, yesterday's much-anticipated protest action failed to occupy sections of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas which traffic officers had closed in anticipation of a big protest.

Three truckloads of antiriot cops sent to avert trouble stayed meters away. Others stayed out of sight.

Minutes earlier, lines upon lines of workers were seen on sidewalks around the business center.

Blown by the wind

But taking part in the protest seemed far from their minds. They were lining up for jeepneys and buses that would take them not to where Umali was—but home or to shopping centers which had extended malling hours.

The protesters wanted to light candles "to enlighten" politicians advocating Cha-cha but strong winds swept through the rally site.

Their spirits were undampened.

Together, the Makati employees and the militants from Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) and Buklurang Manggagawa ng Pilipinas marched and chanted to signify their dissent to any move to amend the Constitution.

"This is a show of the joint voices of workers in factories and in Ayala," PM sectoral Rep. Renato Magtubo said. He also said that instead of changing the Constitution, the government should "focus on approving our demand for across-the-board wage increase (and) security of tenure."

In Negros, protesters slammed President Macapagal-Arroyo and her allies for what they called "brazen attempts" to amend the Constitution to protect vested interests.

"We want President Macapagal-Arroyo and her allies to understand that we are fed up with the misery that the government is causing us," Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra said.

Navarra placed the crowd who joined the prayer rally in Bacolod at 10,000, but other organizers said the crowd reached 15,000.

About 3,000 joined a prayer rally in Kabankalan City, while in the diocese of San Carlos about 6,500 took part in four separate rallies, Fr. Edwin Laude, head of its Social Action Center, said.

Laude said the rallies organized by the San Carlos diocese were held at the San Carlos City Cathedral where 1,000 gathered; Cadiz City, 2,000; Escalante City, 1,500; and Guihulngan, Negros Oriental.

Bro. Gus Boquer, president of the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City, said they joined the rally because they wanted democracy to stay alive in the Philippines.

"Basically, you see the silent majority have come out. They are the people who want to say something but normally do not say it. And here they are, finally making their voices be heard," Boquer said.

Iloilo City, Dagupan

He said the "brazen arrogance" of some congressmen had turned off a lot of people and had become a source of embarrassment for the country.

In Iloilo City, around 700 protesters led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan marched in the city's main streets before joining a prayer rally led by Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines president and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo.

In Dagupan, at least 1,500 priests, nuns, seminarians, students and Catholic Church lay leaders marched along major streets and gathered at the city plaza to protest Cha-cha "by any means" under the Arroyo administration.

Priests carried large streamers that read, "Cha-cha, Con-ass, Concon: No! Not Now! Not under GMA!"

'Greed for power'

Students who joined the rally sang "Ang Cha-cha ay Sumabit" to the tune of the traditional Christmas carol, "Ang Pasko ay Sumapit."

They also chanted "Kay JDV (Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.) at Gloria (Ms Arroyo), *wala kaming tiwala*! (We don't trust you)."

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who led the rally, said Ms Arroyo would use all her powers to change the 1987 Constitution to pursue her interest, first by having her supporters appointed to a proposed constitutional commission.

"It's impossible that it won't interfere because it is so greedy for power," Cruz told the INQUIRER.

Mayor Benjamin Lim, the only Pangasinan mayor who attended the rally, said he was putting his political career on the line by going against the administration.

"I have always been consistent when it comes to people in power who want to be tyrants," he said. ***With reports from Carla P. Gomez, Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas, and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes and Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon***

Attention: All SSS Members

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		ER	EE	Total	ER	ER	EE	Total	
1,000 - 1,249.99	1,000	70.70	33.30	104	10	80.70	33.30	114	104
1,250 - 1,749.99	1,500	106.00	50.00	156	10	116.00	50.00	166	156
1,750 - 2,249.99	2,000	141.30	66.70	208	10	151.30	66.70	218	208
2,250 - 2,749.99	2,500	176.70	83.30	260	10	186.70	83.30	270	260
2,750 - 3,249.99	3,000	212.00	100.00	312	10	222.00	100.00	322	312
3,250 - 3,749.99	3,500	247.30	116.70	364	10	257.30	116.70	374	364
3,750 - 4,249.99	4,000	282.70	133.30	416	10	292.70	133.30	426	416
4,250 - 4,749.99	4,500	318.00	150.00	468	10	328.00	150.00	478	468
4,750 - 5,249.99	5,000	353.30	166.70	520	10	363.30	166.70	530	520
5,250 - 5,749.99	5,500	388.70	183.30	572	10	398.70	183.30	582	572
5,750 - 6,249.99	6,000	424.00	200.00	624	10	434.00	200.00	634	624
6,250 - 6,749.99	6,500	459.30	216.70	676	10	469.30	216.70	686	676
6,750 - 7,249.99	7,000	494.70	233.30	728	10	504.70	233.30	738	728
7,250 - 7,749.99	7,500	530.00	250.00	780	10	540.00	250.00	790	780
7,750 - 8,249.99	8,000	565.30	266.70	832	10	575.30	266.70	842	832
8,250 - 8,749.99	8,500	600.70	283.30	884	10	610.70	283.30	894	884
8,750 - 9,249.99	9,000	636.00	300.00	936	10	646.00	300.00	946	936
9,250 - 9,749.99	9,500	671.30	316.70	988	10	681.30	316.70	998	988
9,750 - 10,249.99	10,000	706.70	333.30	1,040	10	716.70	333.30	1,050	1,040
10,250 - 10,749.99	10,500	742.00	350.00	1,092	10	752.00	350.00	1,102	1,092
10,750 - 11,249.99	11,000	777.30	366.70	1,144	10	787.30	366.70	1,154	1,144
11,250 - 11,749.99	11,500	812.70	383.30	1,196	10	822.70	383.30	1,206	1,196
11,750 - 12,249.99	12,000	848.00	400.00	1,248	10	858.00	400.00	1,258	1,248
12,250 - 12,749.99	12,500	883.30	416.70	1,300	10	893.30	416.70	1,310	1,300
12,750 - 13,249.99	13,000	918.70	433.30	1,352	10	928.70	433.30	1,362	1,352
13,250 - 13,749.99	13,500	954.00	450.00	1,404	10	964.00	450.00	1,414	1,404
13,750 - 14,249.99	14,000	989.30	466.70	1,456	10	999.30	466.70	1,466	1,456
14,250 - 14,749.99	14,500	1,024.70	483.30	1,508	10	1,034.70	483.30	1,518	1,508
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Hot Ginebra crushes Sta. Lucia

By June Navarro

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:05 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Talk N Text
6:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Red Bull

ANTIPOLO CITY—BARANGAY GINEBRA showed the strength people were talking about in the offseason.

Flaunting their manpower advantage to the hilt, the Gin Kings crushed the Sta. Lucia Realtors last night, 109-89, in a precise and methodical rout that sent alarming tremors to the Talk 'N Text-PBA Philippine Cup field.

Sunday Salvacion and Mark Caguioa bombed the Realtors with three-pointers right after the opening buzzer at the Ynares Center as the Gin Kings zoomed to a 35-9 lead in the first period.

The carnage continued with Ronald Tubid, Jayjay Helterbrand, Rafi Reavis and Rudy Hatfield chipping in their share of the offensive load that had the Gin Kings pulling away completely, 94-57, after three quarters.

By the time the Ginebra adrenalin had settled down, the Realtors just whiled the time away and conceded their seventh defeat in 17 games with the outcome already beyond doubt.

The victory earned the Gin Kings a sixth straight victory, for a 12-4 record that assured them of at least a playoff for one of the two outright semifinal slots after the classification round.

The Realtors dropped to 10-7.

In the first game, with Tim Cone leaving the coaching job to his assistants, his Alaska Aces turned back the Air21 Express, 100-98.

Out of the running for an outright quarterfinal slot, the Aces improve to 6-10, just half a game behind the Express (7-10), who took their second loss from Alaska in the classification round.

CHINA'S NEXT GOAL

Lords of Asiad set sights on the Olympics

DOHA, QATAR—NO NEW CHINESE super stars were unearthed. There was no 'next' Liu Xiang or Yao Ming. There was no need.

China's athletes dominated the medal count at the Asian Games, their last major test before the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

In so many events, it was China first, daylight second—if it wasn't China, China.

But as the Chinese look ahead to hosting Summer Games, coaches are repeating one message to their athletes: don't get too confident.

Despite the medal haul, Chinese sports officials say they got only what they expected from the young athletes who will form the core of the team they're honing with the aim of replacing the United States atop the Olympic medal standings.

"Their achievements impressed me but the athletes should be aware of the fact that Asian Games are not the same as Olympic Games," said Duan Shijie, a top sports official and deputy head of the Chinese delegation.

"In the Olympics, they will be faced with more pressure, stronger opponents and fiercer competition."

It was a sentiment shared by Liu, who has became a celebrity in China since emerging from relative obscurity to win the men's 110-meter hurdles at the Athens Olympics in a world record-equaling time.

"China may be the big brother in Asia and hard for other Asian countries to catch, but there are lots of countries that are better at Olympic sports such as swimming," Liu said.

Until Liu, China had never won an Olympic gold medal in a men's track sprint event.

Now he owns the world record—his 12.88 seconds at Lausanne, Switzerland in July, and is the world champion.

Liu was the highest-profile athlete at Doha and cruised to a comfortable win in his only event, setting a meet record 13:15 seconds for good measure after admitted the "shadow" of an encroaching teammate forced him to pick up his speed.

China was second to the United States on the medal standings at Athens, with 32 gold medals to 36 for the Americans.

Finishing atop the table at home is almost a national obsession, which is why it surprised some observers that the team for Doha contained so many raw, young athletes.

With only two medals events left Friday—out of 428 for the games—China had 164 gold medals and 315 overall. South Korea was next with 58 gold medals, eight ahead of Japan. *AP*

Late Sports

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

More stories on A29 to 32

Wang powers Chinese five to gold medal

DOHA—CHINA STROLLED TO A 59-44 VICTORY over hosts Qatar in the Asian Games men's basketball final on Friday, paced by former NBA player Wang Zhizhi's 28 points.

It was China's fifth basketball gold medal in six Asian Games, with their only defeat coming in Pusan in 2002.

Despite the absence of Yao Ming, who was allowed to stay in the United States with the Houston Rockets, China had the best of a lively encounter and their relentless attacks and tight defensive play proved too much for the Qataris.

China's coach Jonas Kazlauskas praised his entire team but singled out Wang for his "unimaginable" talent.

"The final was a really good level of basketball, and how we beat our opponents was a really big success," he told a news conference, "We controlled the situation all the time, we played good defence, we made this win. I think this team can be stronger and better in the future."

Qatar came within five points of the Chinese at the end of the first quarter, despite squandering a series of chances. *Reuters*

Pamaskong saya para sa pamilya mula sa Globe Kabalikat

Ika-2 ng Disyembre nang nagsimula ang pamaskong kasiyahan para sa mga pamilya ng mga overseas Pinoy sa iba't ibang lugar sa buong Pilipinas sa Kabalikat Family Days, hatid ng Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) at Globe. Sila'y sinalubong ng isang buong araw ng palaro, pa-raffle at papremyo; meron pang libreng NDD at IDD calls at broadband internet surfing na handog ng Globe Broadband. Sinimulan ito sa Leyte Capitol Gym sa Tacloban City. Nakarating na rin ang Kabalikat Family Days sa Davao, Maguindanao, Oriental Mindoro, Koronadal, Iloilo, Pangasinan, Zamboanga at Agusan del Sur.

WHOA ANG BILIS! Nakasubok ng napakabilis na pagdownload ng mp3 at video ang mga dumalo dahil sa Globe Broadband.

GO GO GO SA PAPREMYO! Bumaha ng Globe give-aways tulad ng Globe1 call cards, fans, coasters at t-shirts.

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ELLA V. IN THE HOUSE! Tawa, kanta at kakulitan ang dala ni Ella V. sa mga taga-Ilo-ilo na binisita ng Kabalikat Family Days.

KATUWAAN KASAMA SI CAMILLE. Nakisaya si Camille Pratts kasama ang buong pamilya sa Kabalikat Family Day sa Pangasinan.

MAABIG YA PASKO, KABALIKAT! Abot hanggang Pangasinan ang saya na dala ng Kabalikat Family Days.

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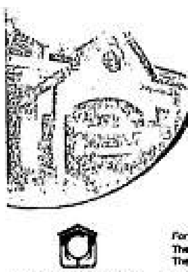
December 17	Enchanted Kingdom, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
December 23	Philippine Sports Commission Training Camp, Baguio

HELLO, BABES? Nagdagsaan ang mga tao para makamusta ang mga kamag-anak nila sa libreng NDD at IDD calls.

AKO ANG SUSUNOD NA DIVA, DI BA? Naging star at tumodo-birit ang mga sumali sa Wow Magic Sing Videoke Challenge.

Tuloy-tuloy lang ang Merryunions ngayong Pasko. Mula pagdating ng iyong mga kamag-anak galing abroad hanggang sa muling pag-alis, nandito ang Globe, ang Kabalikat ng Pinoy Abroad.

Overseas Workers Welfare Administration



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UP regents vote 7-0 for tuition hike

300% increase for incoming freshmen

By DJ Yap

IT'S OFFICIAL.

The cost of education at the state-run University of the Philippines will be triple the current rate starting next year.

Voting 7-0, the UP Board of Regents upheld the controversial proposal to adjust tuition and other fees at the state university, despite mounting opposition from student groups that voiced their protests yesterday at two of the UP's yearly traditions: the Lantern Parade and the Oblation Run.

The board approved president Emerlinda Roman's recommendation to impose a 300-percent increase in tuition, which had not been adjusted since 1989. The increase will apply to incoming freshmen next school year.

With the approval, the cost of an academic unit shall be raised from P300 to P1,000 on the Diliman, Manila and Los Baños campuses, and from P200 to P600 on the Baguio, Visayas and Mindanao campuses. Miscellaneous fees shall also be increased in varying degrees across the campuses.

The BOR, chaired by Commission on Higher Education chief Carlito Puno, also approved the revised Socialized Tuition Financial Assistance Program, which categorizes students according to their financial needs.

UP officials said the modified STFAP would ensure that students who could not afford the tuition would not have to pay, and would even receive stipends of up to P12,000 per semester.

Full rates

Under the new tuition scheme, only the "millionaires" among the students would bear the brunt of the full rates, while the less affluent would pay rates corresponding to their income brackets, the officials noted.

The decision enraged students who had gathered in a massive demonstration outside the College of Law building, where the meeting took place. Upon learning the news, dozens rushed to the lobby to confront the regents. But they later calmed down and peacefully left the Malcolm Hall after their leaders stepped in to pacify them.

University Student Council chair Juan Paolo Alfonso said more protests were being planned in response to the new development. Student Regent Raffy Jones Sanchez, on the other hand, described the decision of the board as an exercise in "shamelessness."

"This administration is worse than the House of Representatives," he said in an apparent reference to the failed bid of administration legislators to effect a Charter change through a constituent assembly.

Protest

Sanchez, along with faculty regent Roland Simbulan, did not attend the meeting in protest of the sudden change in venue. The original venue of the meeting was Quezon Hall, but the officials later moved it to Malcolm Hall to avoid a confrontation with students who had "barricaded" the entrances to the administration building.

At 3:30 p.m., UP vice president for legal affairs Marvic Leonen attempted to enter the hall, only to be blocked by students who had formed a chain around the entrance, amid hoots and loud chants.

Earlier in the day, officials announced the cancellation of the Christmas Lantern Parade, citing security concerns. But some students said the affair went on as scheduled, even if some participants dropped out of the parade.

Some 30 members of the Alpha Phi Omega fraternity streaked naked for their annual "Oblation Run." Spokesperson Joselito Caparino said this year's run was also in protest against the tuition increase, Charter change, and the withholding of funds of the Philippine Collegian, UP's official student publication.

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QC jail warden relieved over Soriano incident

By DJ Yap
and Margaux C. Ortiz

THE QUEZON CITY JAIL WARDEN was relieved yesterday, days after the arrest of former National Bureau of Investigation agent Martin Soriano who was with three prison escorts as they were about to board a reportedly stolen car in Makati City.

But officials of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology said the relief of Supt. Ignacio Panti was only temporary, pending the results of an investigation of the Monday incident.

Interior and Local Government Undersecretary Marius Corpus transferred the command of the jail facility in Kamuning to Chief Insp. Baby Noel Montalvo as caretaker warden.

Corpus said Panti's relief was meant to ensure the latter could not influence the investigation of the case. The warden and the three jail guards with Soriano would be on floating status in the BJMP regional office, Corpus said.

Panti, along with SJO3 Enrique Guevarra, SJO3 Edgardo Naguimbing and SJO3 Eduardo Tayag, would face administrative charges for deviation from duty, said Senior Supt. Serafin Barretto, director of BJMP-National Capital Region.

On Monday, Soriano, detained at the Quezon City jail for several criminal charges including kidnapping and robbery, was arrested with his escorts after leaving a convenience store in Makati City. They were about to board a Mitsubishi Lancer car, which was reportedly stolen.

They had just left a Makati City court and were on their way to another court in Quezon City, officials said.

The purported owner of the vehicle, Johnny Catayong, a businessman and resident of San Isidro, Makati City, saw and followed the vehicle, which he reportedly lost to car thieves two months ago, according to the National Bureau of Investigation.

NBI agents who were about to arrest the passengers in the vehicle were surprised to find Soriano and the three guards inside.

The escorts later explained that Soriano offered the use of the vehicle, which was allegedly pawned to his buy-and-sell business, since no prison van could take them to Makati City that day.

But under BJMP rules, the use of a private vehicle is prohibited since this could lead to "fraternization" between jail guards and prisoners.

Soriano claimed he did not know the vehicle was stolen. He said legitimate papers were presented to his secretary. The NBI charged him with fencing for possession of a stolen property.

Meanwhile, Salvador Panelo, Soriano's counsel, said his client was innocent. "The silver Mitsubishi Lancer... was actually mortgaged by a certain Tom Nugid to (Soriano's) lending firm," Panelo said.

The firm, Galleon Nugget Trading, was jointly owned by Soriano and his business partner Maria Irlanda, the lawyer added.

"Their operations manager, Helen Gratil, dealt with Nugid, a known casino player," Panelo said. But he said Gratil was also innocent because Nugid gave her the car's complete documents.

"The antifencing law prohibits knowingly buying stolen property for profit," Panelo said. Soriano could not have known that the car was stolen because he was in jail, he added. Panelo urged the NBI to go after Nugid instead of his client.

NBI National Capital Region officials who filed car theft charges against Soriano and four of his civilian companions, said the fencing charge entailed a bigger penalty than car theft because the vehicle was worth over P500,000.

Soriano was arrested in 2005 for allegedly abducting Caroline Guillen in Makati City.

He was also accused by police asset Mary "Rosebud" Ong of kidnapping her and her mother.

Pinoy James Bond dies in NY

By Margaux C. Ortiz

RANIN

THE NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation's own version of "James Bond" is gone.

Retired NBI official Salvador Ranin, considered a "legend" by his colleagues, died Dec. 6 of kidney complications in his New York City home. He was 65.

"He excelled in his job that he was known at the bureau as James Bond," NBI NCR agent Federico Criste said. Other agents referred to Ranin as "the Equalizer."

Ranin's remains arrived from the United States the other day and were brought to the chapel of the NBI, where he worked for 40 years. "He was one of the greatest investigators of the bureau," said NBI National Capital Region chief Ruel Lasala, Ranin's operations officer.

Ranin, who joined the bureau in 1964, was known for his sharp mind and excellent strategies. "We learned a lot from him. Apart from his remarkable skills as an investigator, he was also very hardworking and patient," Lasala said. Ranin and his team spent a week in the Cordillera region pursuing suspects in the killing of labor leader Rolando Olalia and his driver in 1986. He was also cited for his exceptional work on cases involving the notorious Leonardo "Nardong Putik" Menesio, Claudio Teehankee Jr. and the Kuratong Baleleng gang.

Ranin will be buried on Dec. 17 at the Holy Cross Memorial in Quezon City. He is survived by his wife Yolanda and children Maria Concepcion and Ronald.

US-RP relations in jeopardy

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

DON'T BE DECEIVED BY Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon's projection of being media-shy, of his seeming reluctance to be lionized.

Deep inside, he's enjoying all the publicity over his conviction of a US Marine for allegedly raping a Filipino woman, and his adamant stand that the convicted American remain in Philippine custody.

Pozon may be a hero to leftists and women activists, but if you ask the man on the street, he'll tell you that not only was the judge wrong in convicting Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, he's putting US-Philippine relations in jeopardy.

If you don't believe me, try asking people who are neither militant nor xenophobic (hater of foreigners), which I did. They'll tell you the victim, "Nicole," was not raped. She had consensual sex with Smith with whom she was smitten the first time she set eyes on him.

How could there have been rape when Nicole was wearing tight-fitting jeans at that time and Smith had to wear a condom?

If you're a woman, try taking off your tight jeans inside a car and you'll know what I mean. If a woman on her own would have difficulty removing her jeans inside a cramped space, how much more her alleged rapist?

A woman friend (not girlfriend) was saved from being raped by a cab driver who forced her into a vacant lot because she wore tight jeans. And, of course, she shouted for help!

Nicole went with Smith in the van, and there was nothing in her statement that she shouted for help. Otherwise, the driver of the van would have testified that she did.

She claims she was drunk at the time. So was Smith, who is younger than she is.

Nicole took offense at Smith's companion calling her a "bitch" and the way she was dumped like a pig by the Americans in the street after she refused to get out of the van. That's why she complained she was raped.

Since Pozon has already convicted Smith, he wants to have his cake and eat it too by having him remain in Philippine custody despite a provision in the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

The VFA provides that American servicemen accused of a crime would remain in US custody pending the outcome of their trial.

And the trial, as legal experts interpret it, includes the appeal after conviction.

All that the US government, our country's friend and ally, wants is for Smith to be confined in the US Embassy while the appeal is ongoing.

Can't we accede to an ally that has helped us tremendously in winning the war against the Abu Sayyaf?

For comments and inquiries please e-mail isumbongmokaytulfo@yahoo.com

'High velocity' bomb used in Jaworski's car

By Jocelyn R. Uy

POLICE SAID YESTERDAY A "HIGH-order" improvised bomb destroyed Pasig Rep. Roberto "Dodot" Jaworksi's car.

Apart from nitrate, forensic experts also discovered residues of cyclonite or RDX powder, a substance found in explosives with "high velocity detonation" in the wreckage of Tuesday's blast, Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman, Eastern Police District director, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"The detonation had a shatter effect on the car's right chassis and floor. The secondary effect punched holes in the roof," Ticman said.

He also said the debris in the explosion site was small, the result of a "high velocity detonation." Ticman said the recent findings gave the police a clearer picture of the incident that would help them identify the suspects.

Scene of the crime operatives and personnel of the Bomb Data Center in Camp Crame collected pieces of evidence from the site even as they continued to sift through the debris.

Ticman said the process of sorting, sifting and analysis was tedious because of the circumstances.

Jaworski, his brother Ryan and bodyguard Romy Gamosa, rushed out of the vehicle as it traveled along C5 Road in Barangay Ugong after they heard a "bang" and saw smoke. The van blew up a few moments later.

Jaworski, who is running against Pasig Mayor Vicente Eusebio's son Bobby in next year's election, suspects that the incident was related to politics or drugs.

"We are looking at all possible angles, including the allegations of Representative Jaworski," said Pasig police chief Senior Supt. Francisco Uyami Jr.

Greenwich pizza: Color it red egg

An egg is one of the most complete and versatile foods available. Eggs are inexpensive and easy to prepare and can be consumed in a variety of ways throughout the day. More than ever, the egg is being recognized for its outstanding nutritional qualities. Nearly all the essential nutrients required for proper functioning of the human body are hiding under that shell.

Did you know that eggs...?

Aside from its nutritional goodness, the egg has also played a very interesting role throughout human history. At around 3,000 B.C., Persians first began using colored eggs to celebrate spring during this time. Ancient Egyptian and Chinese records dated back to 1400 B.C. show that fowl were laying eggs for man. By 600 B.C., people across Europe have domesticated hens.

While it is customary to throw rice at weddings in many countries, French brides break an egg on the threshold of their new home before stepping in---for luck and healthy babies. Germans believe that storks, along with bunnies, roosters and foxes, bring brightly-colored eggs at Easter. Another custom that originated in Germany is to hang red eggs in evergreen trees, a powerful ancient symbol of rebirth and renewal.

In China, a baby's first month birthday calls for a celebration. Proud parents introduce their latest addition to friends and relatives by holding a red egg and ginger party. Traditionally, the baby's name is also announced at this time. Guests attending red egg and ginger parties bring gifts. Lysee or "lucky money" in red envelopes is often given to baby boys, while girls may receive expensive jewelry. The guests don't leave empty handed, either. The parents hand out red-dyed eggs, symbolizing happiness and the renewal of life.

Love that red egg.

The Red Egg or Pulang Itlog, best known as 'Itlog na Maalat' is a common feature on every Filipino dining table especially at breakfast. In this Filipino delicacy, ordinary chicken or duck eggs are cured in a brine solution to give them a salty-flavor. The duck raisers of Pateros and Laguna usually make salted eggs by burying them in salt for several days. It can be eaten alone or with steamed rice and vegetables such as tomato and onions. It is also used as toppings on 'Puto', 'Ensaymada' or as a filler for 'Siopao'.

Speaking of innovative dishes, Greenwich, the Philippines' no.1 pizza chain, used the red egg to come up with a new pizza variant called the Red Egg Royale Pizza. Customers will love the delicious and exciting blend of tastes of the salted egg, fiesta ham, two kinds of cheese and the bechamel sauce.

Suzanne Cruz, Greenwich research & development manager, said the Red Egg Royale Pizza is one of the uniquely delightful pizza flavors Greenwich has ever launched. "This is the first time everyone has heard of red eggs being used as an ingredient in creating a new pizza variant. Our research and development department conducted a series of extensive surveys, trials and taste-testing before determining whether it should be included in the menu offering. Among the product variants we tested, the Red Egg Royale was among the highest rated product we developed," she said.

The new Red Egg Royale Pizza is available in double Primo in Greenwich stores around Metro Manila, Luzon provincial branches and Metro Cebu. For Metro Manila deliveries, please call Greenwich "Garantisado On-Time" delivery 5-55-55.

ADVT

METRO BRIEFS

CEGP reunion

THE COLLEGE Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), the country's oldest-existing youth organization composed of campus journalists and publications, marks its 75th year with a Diamond Anniversary Grand Reunion today. Former Sen. Helena Z. Benitez, the Guild's first female president, will host the 6-10 p.m. affair at her residence at 26 Mariposa St., Cubao, Quezon City. Founded in 1931 by editors of the Varsitarian of the University of Santo Tomas, the Philippine Collegian of the University of the Philippines, the National of the National University and The Guidon of Ateneo de Manila University, the CEGP now has over 750 member-publications across the country, with regional and provincial chapters in all regions. Prominent CEG "alumni" include Supreme Court Justice Artemio Panganiban, businessman Jose Concepcion, lawyer Evalyn Ursua and party-list representative Satur Ocampo. For inquiries, call Rowie Madula at 0919-8577170.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Ailing Dem could cost control of US Senate

WASHINGTON—A DEMOCRATIC SENATOR WAS recovering from emergency brain surgery Thursday after falling abruptly ill, as the party's newly won control of the US Senate hung in the balance.

The fate of Senator Tim Johnson, who reportedly was in critical condition, could cost the Democrats the one vote-majority gained in November's legislative elections.

Johnson, 59, was admitted to George Washington University Hospital on Wednesday after his speech faltered during a teleconference. He was diagnosed with bleeding in the brain from an inherited malformation.

Early Thursday Johnson underwent "successful" emergency brain surgery at the hospital, Congress's attending physician, John Eisold, said in a statement, adding that it was "premature" to give "any long-term prognosis." Later Eisold said Johnson was having an "uncomplicated post-operative course." "He has been appropriately responsive to both word and touch. No further surgical intervention has been required," the physician said.

In a statement released later by Johnson's office, the senator's wife, Barbara Johnson, said her husband, after the surgery was responding to her voice, following directions and had reached for and held her hand.

"Our family is very pleased with his progress and the excellent care he is receiving," she was quoted as saying in the statement.

US media reported Johnson was in critical condition in an intensive care unit, but the hospital refused to comment on Johnson's condition on grounds of patient confidentiality. The senator's office also refused to comment.

The leading Democrat in the Senate, Harry Reid, said he had visited Johnson in his hospital room Thursday morning and "he really looks good." He did not say whether the senator was conscious.

The condition of the senator from South Dakota, a sparsely populated western state that rarely draws national interest, has Washington political circles buzzing.

Johnson's medical crisis comes weeks before a Democratic-led Congress is to convene in January. Democrats wrested control of the Senate and House of Representatives from President George W. Bush's Republicans in Nov. 7 legislative elections.

If Johnson were to die or resign, the Republican governor of South Dakota would choose a replacement to serve the remaining two years of his six-year term.

The choice of a Republican lawmaker would give back to Republicans the majority they lost in November: each party would hold 50 seats, and Republican Vice President Dick Cheney would wield the tie-breaking vote.

That would leave only the House, where Democrats won 233 of its 435 seats, in a position to oppose the Bush administration, mainly through investigations, especially on the conduct of the war in Iraq.

AFP

JOHNSON in 2005 photo. AP

US gives up plan to monitor visitors

WASHINGTON—DOMESTIC SEcurity officials have for now given up on plans to develop a facial or fingerprint recognition system to determine whether a vast majority of foreign visitors leave the country, officials say.

Domestic security officials had described the system, known as US Visit, as critical to security and important in efforts to curb illegal immigration. One-third of the overall total of illegal immigrants are believed to have overstayed their visas, a congressional report says.

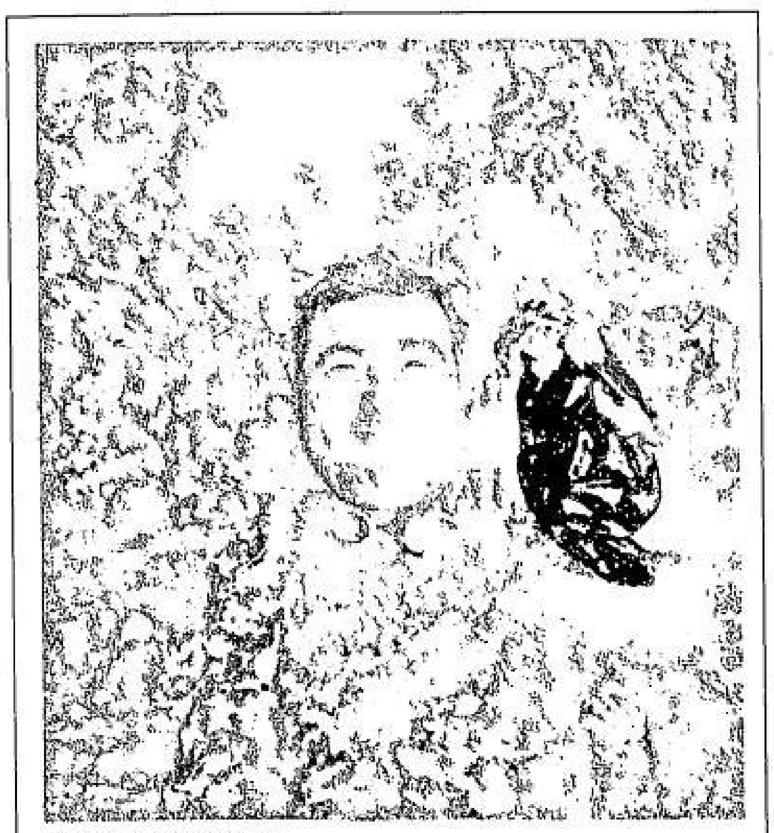
Tracking visitors took on particular urgency after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, when it became clear that some of the hijackers had remained in the country after their visas had expired.

But in recent days, officials at the Homeland Security Department have conceded that they lack the financing and technology to meet their deadline to have exit-monitoring systems at the 50 busiest land border crossings by next December. A vast majority of foreign visitors enter and exit by land from Mexico and Canada, and the policy shift means that officials will remain unable to track the departures.

A report released on Thursday by the Government Accountability Office, the nonpartisan investigative arm of Congress, restated those findings, reporting that the administration believes that it will take five years to 10 years to develop technology that might allow for a cost-effective departure system.

Domestic security officials, who have allocated $1.7 billion since the 2003 fiscal year to track arrivals and departures, argue that creating the program with the existing technology would be prohibitively expensive.

New York Times News Service



IMAGES OF 2006

A reveller is covered in tomato pulp during the annual "Tomatina" (tomato fight) in the Mediterranean village of Bunol, near Valencia, Aug. 30. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Contrite Abe, ministers to forfeit pay

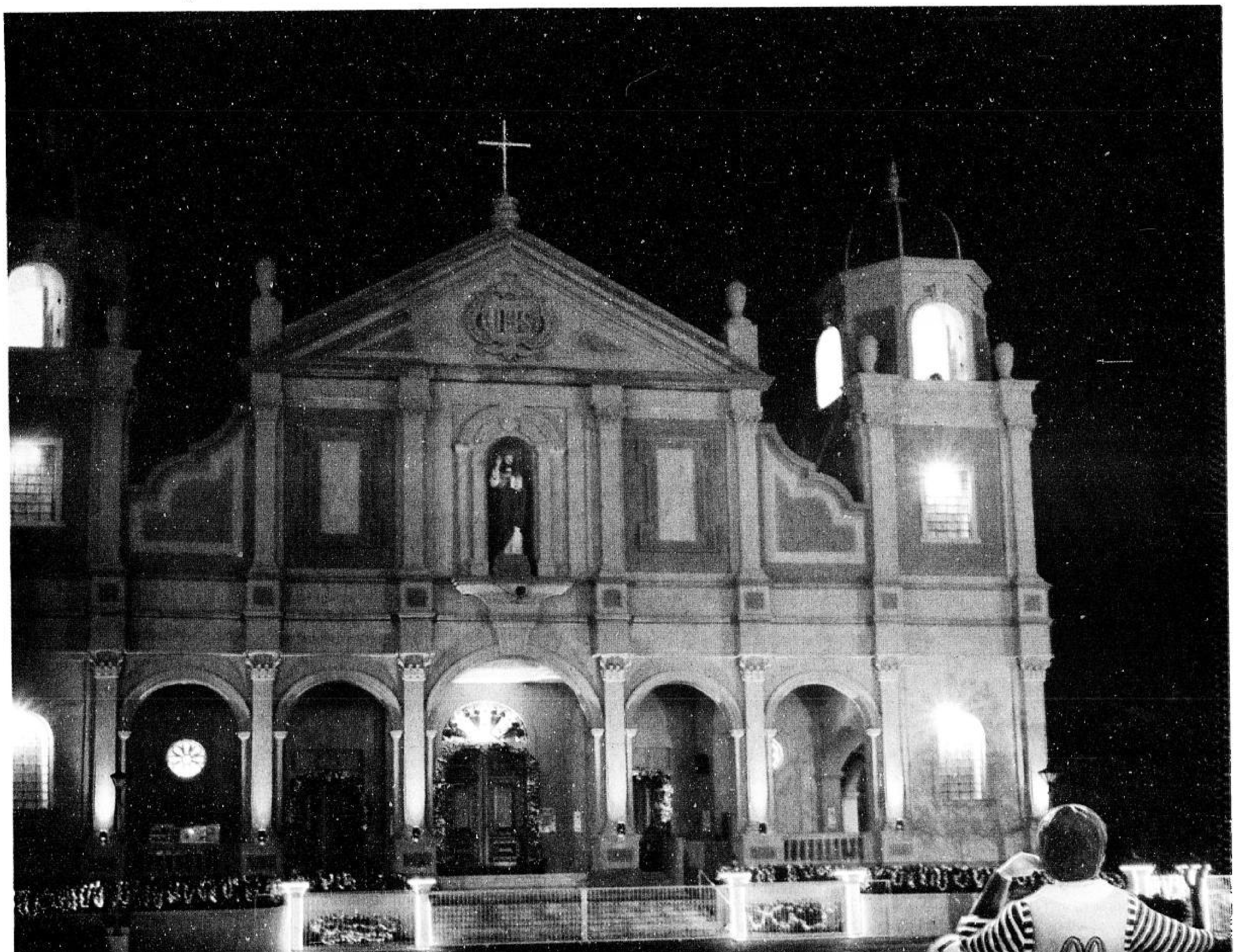
TOKYO—Several top lieutenants to Japan's prime minister will join him in forfeiting their salaries for three months after the embarrassing revelation that government officials posed as regular citizens to ask softball questions at a series of public "town hall" meetings, the top government spokesperson said Thursday. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paved the way Wednesday, saying he would return his salary for the next three months after a commission looked into the public hearing on education reform. On Thursday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki said he would be among several top officials also giving up pay. The others include Education Minister Bunmei Ibuki, Transportation Minister Tetsuzo Fuyushiba and Justice Minister Jinen Nagase. Abe is paid 41.5 million yen ($355,000) a year before taxes.

AP

Probe: Diana death accident, not murder

LONDON—A long-awaited report into the death of Princess Diana in a 1997 Paris car crash concluded Thursday it was a "tragic accident," dismissing theories it was a murder plot by British intelligence. But the father of her last boyfriend, Dodi al-Fayed, immediately condemned the 800-page report as a "cover up" and renewed his accusations that the British establishment organized it to prevent Diana marrying a Muslim. His comments came shortly after former British police chief Lord John Stevens presented findings in the report—the product of a three-year investigation—that are broadly in line with the conclusions of a French probe seven years ago. "There was no conspiracy to murder any occupants of that car. This was a tragic accident," Stevens said. He also rejected allegations that Diana was pregnant and that she and Dodi planned to marry. "None of them have indicated that she was either about to or wished to get engaged," he said. He added that Prince William, Diana's elder son, had told him his mother had not give him the slightest indication of such intentions.

AFP



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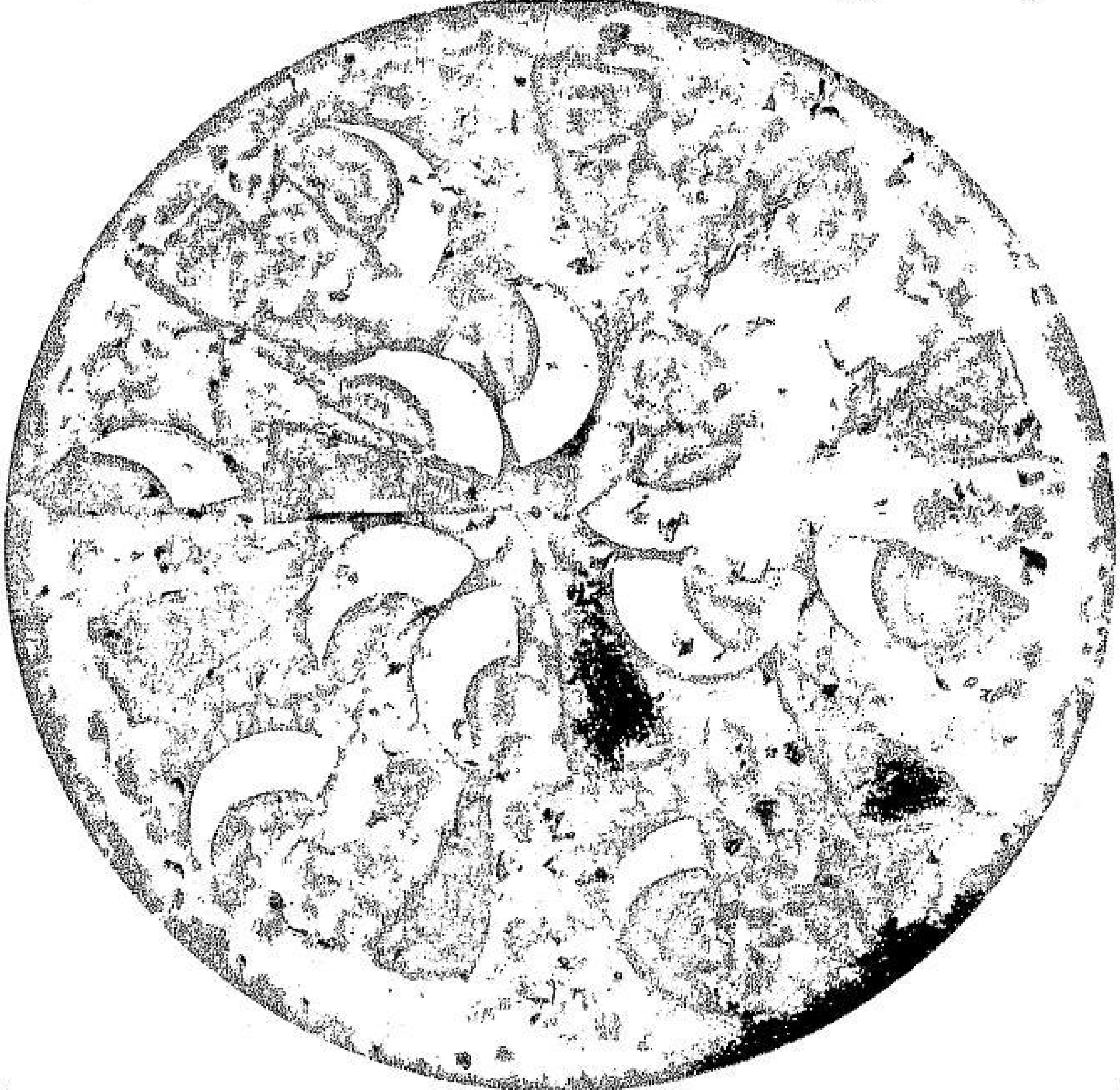
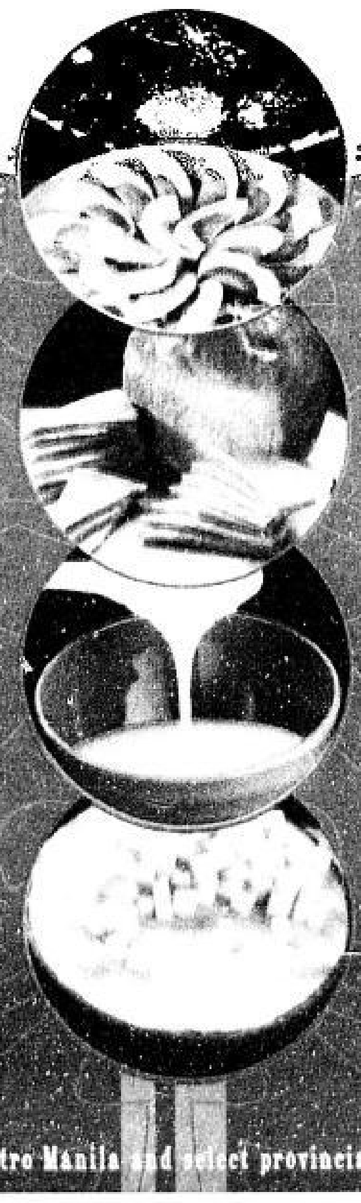
The Red Egg Royale Pizza





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greenwich

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Jaidee wrests lead; Miñoza fires 64/A32

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Near-misses for 4 gutsy Pinoy bets

15TH ASIAN GAMES
DOHA 2006

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—There were several near-misses for the Philippine contingent at the 15th Asian Games. They were the athletes who, by the skin of their teeth, fell short of landing a medal in their respective events.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco called them "true fighters," the athletes who tried to surpass themselves but failed to make the honor roll of medalists.

"*Hindi lang sila basta kasali, lahat gustong lumaban hanggang sa huli* (They were not mere participants, they fought to the end), he said.

The INQUIRER picked four courageous Filipino performers who went home empty-handed but deserve praise. There might be more near-misses out there but these four truly stand out:

o Danielle Cojuangco was just scores of meters away from the silver medal in equestrian's jumping event when her mount, Kidit Saint Clair, clipped the last parallel rails. Penalized a few points for the infraction, the pretty, 21-year-old daughter of Negros Rep. Mark Cojuangco finished with 10 penalties and settled for seventh place, just 2 off the silver medalist Joo Jung-hyun of South Korea on board Seven Up 15. Incidentally, it was the same event won by the semi-retired Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski in the 2002 Busan Asiad.

o Cyclist Marites Bitbit thought she had the bronze all sewed up in the women's points race finals when Thai rider Chanpeng Nontasin took the outside lane and broke free. Bitbit, who had been in third spot with 8 points for most of the race, tried to give chase but failed to wiggle out from her tight group at the back. She lost to the Thai by a mere 3 points.

o Long jumper Henry Dagmil, the brightest and perhaps the only medal hope in track and field, gave his last ounce of strength to achieve a third-best 7.76 meters in his fifth of six attempts. But then came Chinese outsider Chang Xiaoyi, who leapt to a final distance of 7.78m, and Saudi Arabia's Ahmed Faez Bin Marsouq, who snared the bronze with a last-leap 7.85m. Dagmil, a strong second in the qualifying round, wound up fifth.

o Army man Irineo Toribio, decisive 4-0 victor over Inthanousone Vilaysouk of Laos in the round of 16, met his match in Uzbekistan's Ihtiyor Sharapov in the quarterfinals of -55 kilogram class in karate's kumite. In a very close, scoreless fight, a dubious Sharapov right punch that supposedly stopped two inches short of Toribio's chest scored late in the fight. A member of the karate jury said the punch did not score but he was outvoted by his two peers. Toribio lost because of that phantom punch and failed to clinch at least a bronze.

In all, the national contingent captured four gold, six

NEAR-MISSES/ A30

2006 ASIAN GAMES MEDAL TALLY AS OF DEC 15, 2006; 6:25 PM

Nation	G	S	B	Total	Nation	G	S	B	Total
China	164	88	63	315	UAE	3	4	3	10
South Korea	58	53	82	193	Mongolia	2	5	8	15
Japan	50	71	77	198	Indonesia	2	3	15	20
Kazakhstan	23	19	43	85	Syria	2	1	3	6
Thailand	13	15	26	54	Tajikistan	2	0	2	4
Iran	11	15	22	48	Jordan	1	3	4	8
Uzbekistan	11	14	14	39	Lebanon	1	0	2	3
India	10	18	26	54	Myanmar	0	4	7	11
Taiwan	9	10	27	46	Kyrgyzstan	0	2	6	8
Malaysia	8	17	17	42	Macau	0	1	6	7
Qatar	8	11	11	30	Pakistan	0	1	3	4
Singapore	8	7	12	27	Sri Lanka	0	1	2	3
Saudi Arabia	8	0	6	14	Iraq	0	1	1	2
Bahrain	7	10	4	21	Turkmenistan	0	1	0	1
Hong Kong	6	12	10	28	Laos	0	1	0	1
North Korea	6	9	16	31	Nepal	0	0	3	3
Kuwait	6	5	2	13	Afghanistan	0	0	1	1
Philippines	4	6	9	19	Bangladesh	0	0	1	1
Vietnam	3	13	7	23	Yemen	0	0	1	1

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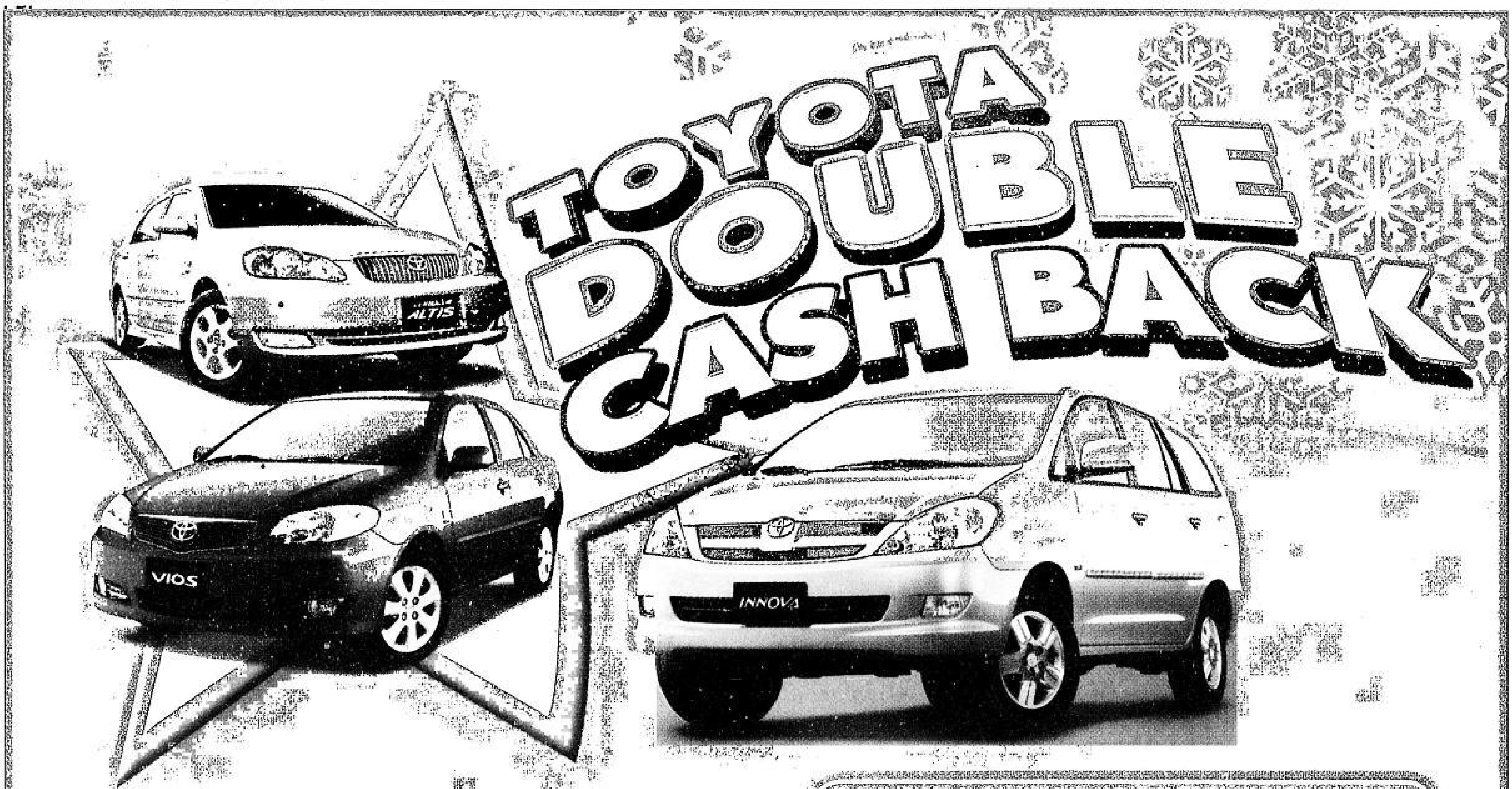

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RP Doha Asian Games medalists

Gold—Antonio Gabica, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Violito Payla, boxing, flyweight 51 kg; Joan Tipon, boxing, bantamweight 54 kg; Rene Catalan, wushu, -52kg

Silver—Mary Antoinette Rivero, taekwondo, women's 67 kg; Tshomlee Go, taekwondo, men's 62 kg; Antonio Gabica, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Jeffrey de Luna, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Ma. Marna Pabillore, karate, women's kumite 53 kg; Edward Ayangwa Folayang, wushu 70kg

Bronze—Kathleeen Eunice Alora, taekwondo, women's 47 kg; Veronica Domingo, taekwondo, women's 63 kg; Manuel Rivero Jr., taekwondo, men's 67 kg; Godfrey Castro, boxing, light flyweight 48 kg; Genebert Basadre, boxing, lightweight 60 kg; Michael Eric Bibat, golf, men's individual; Cecil Mamiit, tennis, men's singles; Cecil Mamiit/Frederick Taino, tennis, men's doubles; Noel Espinosa, karate, men's kata individual.

THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAND out a total of P13.5 million in cash incentives to the returning Filipino medalists from the 15th Doha Asian Games.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to hand out the rewards to the achievers in the Doha Asiad during a courtesy call of Team Philippines in Malacañang at a date to be announced later.

The Sports Incentive Act rewards an Asian Games gold medalist with a P1 million bonus, a silver medalist P500,000 and a bronze medalist P100,000 with the funds provided by Pagcor.

But the President approved last week additional rewards of P500,000, P300,000 and P200,000 for the gold, silver and bronze winners, respectively.

Billiards player Antonio "Gaga" Gabica, the country's most outstanding Asian Games athlete, will bring home a windfall of P2.3 million for clinching the men's 9-ball singles gold medal (P1.5 million) and the silver in the 8-ball singles (P800,000).

The other gold medalists are boxing's Violito Payla and Joan Tipon and wushu's Rene Catalan. They will each receive P1.5 million.

Jeffrey de Luna, who lost to Gabica in the men's 9-ball finals, leads four other silver medalists who will receive P800,000 apiece.

The others are taekwondo jins Mary Antoinette Rivero and Tshomlee Go, karateka Maria Marna Pabillore and wushu's Eduard Folayang.

Filipino-American tennis player Cecil Mamiit has a total of P600,000 after pocketing a bronze in the men's singles and another one with fellow Fil-Am Eric Taino in the men's doubles. Taino's share is P300,000.

The other bronze medalists receiving P300,000 each are taekwondo jins Kathleen Eunice Allora, Veronica Domingo and Manuel Rivero Jr., boxers Godfrey Castro and Genebert Basadre, golfer Michael Bibat and karateka Noel Espinosa.

The country's 4-6-9 gold-silver-bronze medal output in Doha was its best showing in the quadrennial sports conclave since the the 4-5-9 tally of their predecessors in the 1986 Seoul Asian Games and bettered the 3-7-16 performance in the Busan Asiad four years ago.

Fielding a total of 299 athletes—the biggest RP contingent in the 55-year history of the Asian Games—the country wound up 18th overall out of 45 participating nations. The country also placed 18th place finish in the Busan Asiad.

EDUARD Folayang (right) lands a blow on Xu Yanfei in

Near-misses for 4...

From page A29

silver and nine bronze medals in the 15-day competition, placing 18th overall among the 45 nations in the fold.

Wushu fighter Rene Catalan capped the RP campaign with an awe-inspiring 2-0 win against Vietnam's Phan Quoc Vinh for the men's -52 kilogram gold on Thursday.

Scoring four victories in the last four days of the Games, the Filipinos also drew gold-medal performances from Antonio Gabica in billiards' 9-ball and from flyweight Violito Payla and bantamweight Joan Tipon in boxing.

The silver medalists from the 227-strong contingent were Gabica in billiards' 8-ball, Jeffrey De Luna in 9-ball, Marie Antoinette Rivero and Thsomlee Go in taekwondo's 67 kg and 62 kg classes, respectively, Ma. Marna Pabillore in karate's women's -63 kg kumite and Eduard Foolayang in wushu's 70kg combat.

Bidders in golf and tennis, as well as in boxing, karate and taekwondo, bagged the country's nine bronze medals.

The medalists were Michael Bibat in men's individual golf, Cecil Mamiit in singles and Mamiit and Eric Taino in men's doubles in tennis, flyweight Godfrey Castro and lightweight Genebert Basadre in boxing, karateka Noel Espinosa in men's individual kata and Manuel Rivero Jr. (67 kg), Kathleen Eunice Alora (47 kg) and Veronica Domingo (63 kg) in taekwondo.

Villa stakes chess crown

ERVIL VILLA WILL DEfend his title when the 9th Alay kay Mayor Marides Carlos Fernando (Part 2) 1900 and below Active Chess Tournament reels off today at the Marikina Sports Park. Conrado Diaz who lost via the tie break to Villa in the Part 1 of Alay Kay MCF is expected to play along with Kusain Nor, Arthur de Lima, Raul Carino, Isagani de Ramos, Gabriel Nagallo, Joseph Balmaceda, Danilo Azucena, Marc Simborio, Romielord Guerra and Marc Christian Nazario. For inquiries, call Marikina Chess Federation president Johnny Gaudia at 0910-6268674 and 9476993. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

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he wushu 70 kg final won by the Chinese. LYN RILLON

Gabica, De Luna joining Japan tilt

FILIPINO POOL HEROES ANTONIO "Gaga" Gabica and Jeffrey de Luna will represent the country again in the 2006 Mezzcue Invitational 9-ball Scotch doubles event on Dec. 29-30 in Japan.

Gabica said he and De Luna would take a few days rest after their one-gold, 2-silver stint in the just-concluded 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, before resuming practice.

The 34-year-old Gabica, who emerged as the winningest Filipino Asiad campaigner with a gold medal in the 9-ball and a silver in the 8-ball, arrived yesterday with the 22-year-old De Luna, his victim in the 9-ball final.

Jean Gabica, wife of Gaga and their siblings Antonio Jr. (5-year-old) and Antonela (1-year-old and 6 months) welcomed them at the airport.

"I'm grateful to our countrymen for supporting and praying for us," said Gaga, who will get P2.3 million in incentives, in Filipino. "This victory is for the Filipino people."

Gaga also thanked Perry and Verna Mariano of Bugsy's Promotions for giving him and De Luna the break in international competitions.

Mariano said other invited players in the event are former two-time Asian Games champion Yang Ching-shun and 2005 World Pool champ Wu Chia-ching of Chinese Taipei, Jeong Young-hwa of Korea, Li He Wen of China, 2005 SEA Games 9-ball ruler Luong Chi Dung and Nguyen Van Thong of Vietnam.

Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines president Ernesto Fajardo and BSCP chair and Raya sports president Yen Makabenta also lauded Gabica and De Luna for their feat. *Marlon Bernardino*

JEFFREY de Luna (left) raises the hand of gold medalist Antonio Gabica after their 9-ball final. LYN RILLON

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Winners welcome Dec. 19

THE WELCOME rites in Malacañang for the Filipino medalists of the Doha Asian Games will be held as originally scheduled on Dec. 19.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has agreed to meet the returning sports heroes earlier so they can enjoy their cash incentives at once and have more time to be with their families for the holidays.

Rep. Monico Puentevella, who is also the Philippine Olympic Committee vice president, announced the change in the scheduled welcome ceremony for the athletes, who won four golds, six silvers and nine bronze medals in the 45-nation sportsfest which ended yesterday in Qatar.

The main bulk of the Asiad winners will arrive tomorrow and will be joined by other medalists who had flown in early this week for the usual courtesy call on Dec. 19 at 10 a.m.

This year's Asiad haul is the Philippines' best performance since the 1962 Jakarta Games where the country picked up seven golds on top of 6 silvers and 24 bronzes.

The country's finest Asiad showing was in the Manila edition in 1954 where the host nation won 14 gold medals, 14 silvers and 17 bronzes to place second overall to Japan. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Chessers land 8th

TEAM PHILIPPINES settled for a draw with 10th-ranked Turkmenistan in the final round late Thursday to finish eighth in the Classical/Standard Team chess competition of the 15th Asian Games at the Al-Dana Club in Doha, Qatar. The Philippines and Bangladesh actually wound up tied for seventh place with 14.5 points each before the tiebreaker was applied that had the Filipinos finishing a rung lower. Darwin Laylo trounced fellow International Master Meilis Annaberdiev on board 1 even as Ronald Dableo split the point with Mesgen Amanov on board 2 to cushion the loss of 14-year-old Jedara Docena to WGM Mekhri Geldyeva on board 3. Meanwhile, the top-seeded Indian team tallied 22.5 points to run away with the gold medal, beating China which finished with 17.5 points, and Iran, which won the bronze with 16.5 points. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

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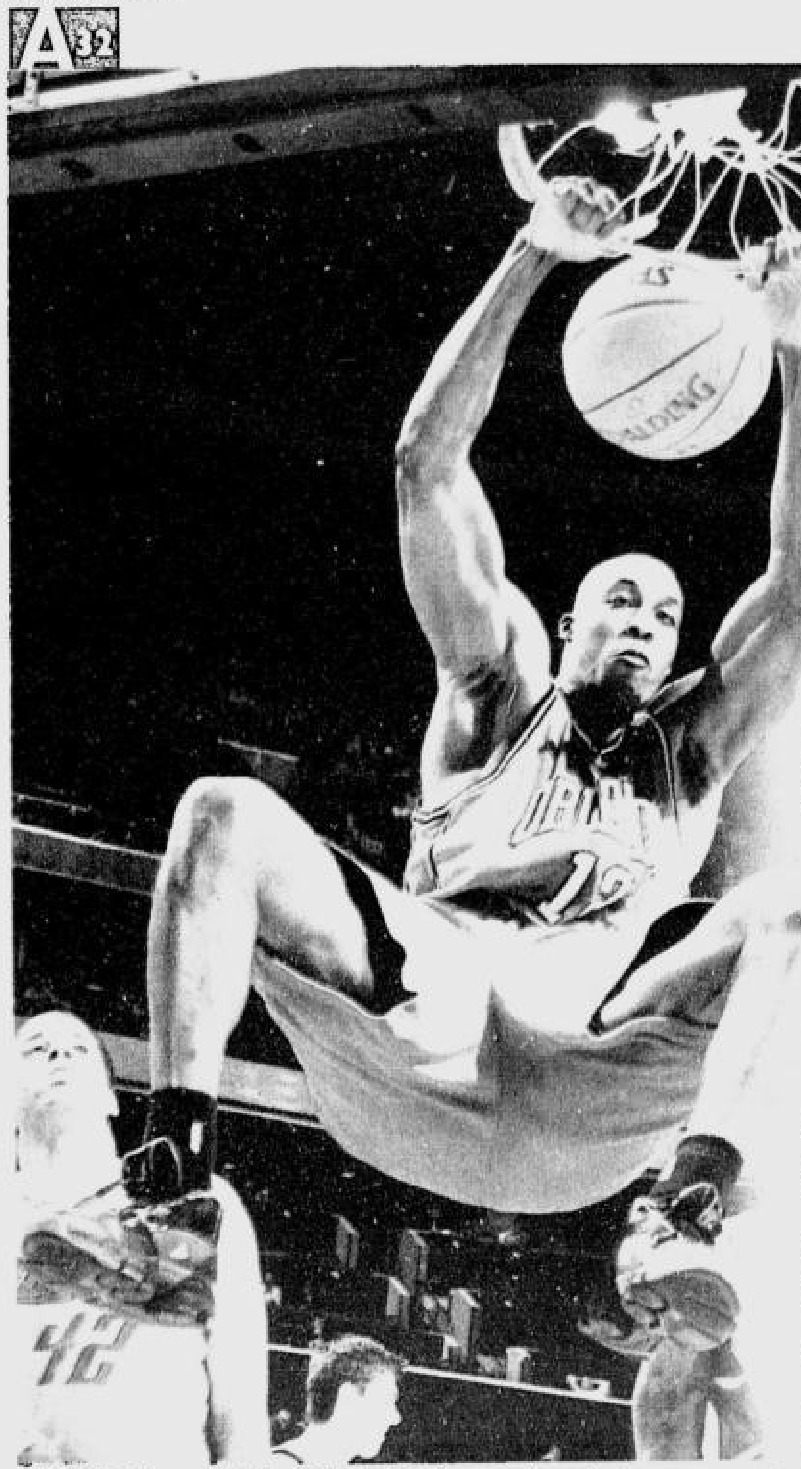
SPORTS



DWIGHT Howard of the Orlando Magic soars for a dunk. AFP

Charlotte checks skid

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA—Sean May scored a career-high 32 points to help the Charlotte Bobcats snap a four-game losing streak by beating the Orlando Magic, 99-89, in the NBA on Thursday.

Rookie Adam Morrison added 22 points for the Bobcats, his best outing on Charlotte's home court since scoring 27 against Miami on Nov. 25.

Emeka Okafor had 13 points and 10 rebounds, Raymond Felton scored 12 points, and Gerald Wallace 12 for the Bobcats, who posted their first double-digit win of the season.

Keyon Dooling scored 20 points for the Magic, who lost their third consecutive game. Carlos Arroyo added 13 points and Travis Diener 12. Dwight Howard pulled down 12 rebounds, but was held to eight points, nearly 10 below his average.

Spurs 103, Hornets 77

At New Orleans, Manu Ginobili scored 24 points and Tony Parker added 19, leading San Antonio to victory over undermanned New Orleans.

Tim Duncan had 11 points and nine rebounds for the Spurs, who never trailed.

The Hornets (10-11) dressed only 10 players and were no match for the Southwest Division leading Spurs (18-6), who led 75-55 in the third quarter after Brent Barry's driving floater that went in off the glass as he was fouled.

The Spurs won their third game in a row and seventh out of eight.

Rasual Butler scored 17 points for New Orleans, while Desmond Mason added 16 points and nine rebounds. Chris Paul had 12 assists, but was held to six points—12.8 below his average—and spent the fourth quarter on the bench.

Warriors 109, Rockets 107

At Oakland, California, Baron Davis hit a long 3-pointer with 1.2 seconds left to lift Golden State over Houston and end a three-game losing streak to the Rockets.

Yao Ming matched his season high with 38 points and grabbed a season-best 18 rebounds, but missed his final two shots in the closing seconds. After one of those misses, Golden State got a final chance, and Davis capitalized for the Warriors' third straight win at home.

Davis finished with 34 points and eight assists to lead five Warriors in double figures, but had his stretch of three straight double-doubles snapped. Monta Ellis had 17 points and six assists, and Andris Biedrins added 15 points off the bench for Golden State.

Luther Head had a season-high 26 points and nine rebounds, and Rafer Alston added 19 points, eight assists and six boards for Houston. *AP*

J-Ro helps Asia forge Lexus tie

FILIPINO STAR JENNIFER ROSALES teamed up with Candie Kung in securing a crucial draw in the day's final match as Team Asia forged a 3-3 tie with The International squad in yesterday's foursome matches firing off the Lexus Cup at the Tanah Merah Country Club's Garden course in Singapore.

Rosales and Kung came through with a big recovery on the final hole against Sherri Steinhauer and Nikki Campbell after going one down on the 17th with Kung chipping to within two feet for an easy par. Steinhauer missed an eight-foot putt.

Winning for the Asians were South Korean Lee Seon-hwa and compatriot Young Kim (6&5 against Britain's Laura Davies and America's Brittany Lincicome) and Lee Jee-young and Meena Lee (2 up on Americans Paula Creamer and Natalie Gulbis).

Asia suffered a 16-8 defeat in the Ryder Cup-style match play event a year ago, but captain Grace Park has assembled a much stronger team in Singapore this time.

Jaidee wrests lead; Miñoza shoots 64

MIÑOZA

By Musong R. Castillo

THONGCHAI JAIDEE, A FORMER PARAtrooper who is now Thailand's No. 1 golfer, zoomed to the Volvo Asian Masters lead after churning out a second straight four-under-par 68 at the Thai Country Club in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday.

The US PGA Tour veteran Jaidee now has a 136 aggregate, a shot ahead of countryman Thaworn Wiratchant, who submitted a 65, and two-up on young Prom Meesawat, who fired a 70 for 138.

Asian Tour Order of Merit leader Jeev Milkha Singh of India celebrated his 35th birthday with a 66 and joined Meesawat in third spot, even as first round leader Prayad Marksaeng, another Thai, assembled a level 72 for joint fifth at 139.

But Filipino ace Frankie Miñoza made a serious run by shooting a 64 to blow back in contention at 140, just four off the leader.

After carding a 76 Thursday, Miñoza opened up with a bogey 5 on the par-4 first, before birdieing the next three holes, shooting an eagle on No. 7 and closing out his front nine with two more birds for a 31.

He actually had another bogey on No. 5 before playing the final nine at 33 for 140, just four shots back heading into the final 36 holes of the $650,000 (around P32.5 million) event reserved for the top 60 players of the Asian Tour.

Angelo Que shot a 71 for 143, good for a 27th place tie.

Juvic Pagunan, who started the day just shots back, stumbled with a triple bogey 8 on No. 14 before a double on the par-3 16th left him with a 75 for 147, now 11 strokes back.

‘Magic’ Stakes kicks off today

By Musong R. Castillo

OUTSTANDING AUSTRALIAN IMPORTS GET the stage all to themselves today as the first-ever Magic Millions Million Stakes is flagged off at the Santa Ana Park in Makati.

Golden Link, a stayer to be handled by ace Jonathan B. Hernandez, Leave No Doubt, and the hard-finishing Marque are tipped to crowd each other for top honors in the P1 million race set over 1,600 meters.

Brothers Val and Patti Dilema ride Leave No Doubt and Marque, respectively.

The race, which will give P600,000 to the winner, is being sponsored by Magic Millions, a prime Australian company that sells some of the finest race horses in the world.

Eligibility for this event covers all thoroughbreds purchased from Magic Millions from three years ago to the present.

The event was formally launched Thursday afternoon at the Shangri-La in Makati, with no less than Magic Millions managing director David Chester promising more stakes races in the years to come.

Chester also bared that an Asian championship is now in the drawing board and that Magic Millions management is keen on holding it in the Philippines and invite entries from Malaysia, Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong.

"Horseracing and thoroughbred sales go hand in hand at Magic Millions," said Chester. "We believe that our commitment to the Philippine horseracing industry goes beyond the sale of horses."

"We give out around Aus$5 million (around P185 million) in sponsorship of races around the world each year," Chester said. "And we think that the Asia Cup will be a good incentive for our buyers here."

Armidale (JM Saulog), Fairy Queen (Lord Santos), Great Emma (Dominador Borbe), Princess Camille (JM Ladiana) and Sweet Xarah (JL Lazaro) round out the field in the centerpiece race.

SPORTSWATCH

JAV golf annual fundraiser under way

THE 2ND JUNIOR GOLF ASSOCIATION OF VALLEY (JAV) GOLF ANNUAL fundraiser is scheduled today at Valley's Executive course. This event aims to raise funds for the development of Valley's junior golfers. Among the JAV products are Bambee de la Paz and Ryan Monsalve. Tournament fee is P1,800 for non-members and P1,200 for members. Junior golfers will only have to pay P500.

Candidates clip St. Benilde

THE CANDIDATES CLIPPED COLLEGE OF ST. BENILDE, 2-0, LAST WEEKEND TO move up to a tie for second place in the Ang Liga Pilipina football championship at the Philsports pitch in Pasig City. Made up of mostly national team members, the Candidates booked their fifth win in six outings to catch up with idle Far Eastern University at second spot. Both teams were behind pacesetting University of Santo Tomas (5-0) in the event organized by the Philippine National Women's Football Association. Over at the Nomads field in Parañaque City, Sphere ran over Nomads, 10-0, to also wheel into a tie with the team it beat as they tote 3-3 win-loss marks.

Round 3 of Makati Salpukan on

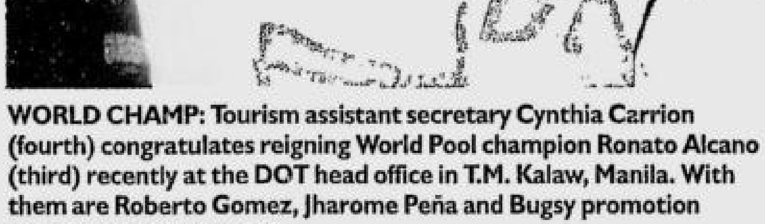
ROUND THREE OF MAKATI COLISEUM'S P3 MILLION COCKFEST, DUBBED AS . Pamaskong Salpukan 6-cock derby, unfolds at 6 p.m. today with 60 fights scheduled. After two days of qualifying rounds, five entries have already advanced to the finals: Arcat of Teng Ranola, Ika Pasko Sa Pasay Dec. 15 of Butchoy Olano and Lito Roque, Sierra Madre Ridge of Jerome Mercado and Pogi I and II of Berting group. The remaining elimination rounds are set Dec. 18 and 23. Championship rounds of the event promoted by Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. will be held on Dec. 27 and 30. Guaranteed prize is P3 million. For info, call 896-3545 and 895-6475.

Las Piñas 3-cocker slates 62 fights

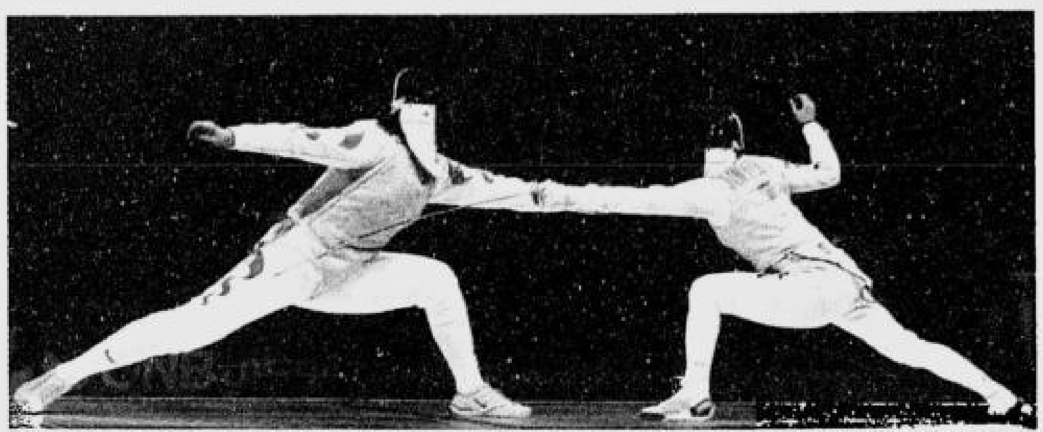
A WILD SCRAMBLE FOR THE TITLE LOOMS AS COCKERS OF MUNTINLUPA, Parañaque, Pasay, Las Piñas and Cavite clash in a special 3-cocker tonight at Las Piñas Coliseum. The first of 62 fights unfolds at 7 p.m. Among those invited by host Baldo Perez are Mayor Nene Aguilar, Paeng Arciaga, Mimi Itchon, Richard Ramos, Marlon de Castro, Jover Dilao, B. Angel, Danny Alejo, Arki dela Cruz, Lito Kisapmata, JTB Farms, Strike Revilla, Cito Zamesa, Alex Tobias and RC Sayaman. Meanwhile, coliseum manager Alex Tobias and RC Sayaman will jointly host the Christmas 4-cock derby on Dec. 23, with P500,000 at stake and an entry fee of P8,800. For info, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

SJC Rambulan starts today

BIG-TIME COCKFIGHTING TAKES PLACE AT SAN JUAN COLISEUM TODAY AS the Christmas Rambulan 6-cock derby fires off at 2 p.m., with more than 90 matches on tap. The tough list of participants include sabong idol Patrick Antonio, Reps. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Anthony Miranda and Danny Lagbas, Rudy Albano, Romy Manalansan, Butch Nunez, Mike Bernardino, Anthony Lim, Blandy Tolentiño, Jun Topacio, Pol Estrellado, Benjie Lim, Mayor Salvador Perez of Pangasinan, Sam Mendoza, Col del Mundo, Bobby Doromal, Carie Chua, Mayor Buddy Dunca, Raymond Velayo, Dori Du of Davao, Arnold Mendoza, William Go, Enjie Nas, Lito Roque and Butchoy Olano. A guaranteed prize of P2 million awaits the winners of the event hosted by SJC owner R. Pineda. For details on cockhouse reservations, call 725-5369 and 725-6563.



WORLD CHAMP: Tourism assistant secretary Cynthia Carrion (fourth) congratulates reigning World Pool champion Ronato Alcano (third) recently at the DOT head office in T.M. Kalaw, Manila. With them are Roberto Gomez, Jharome Peña and Bugsy promotion manager Verna Mariano.



SOUTH Korea's Nam Hyun Hee (right) duels with China's Chen Jinyan in the women's team foil finals during the 15th Asian Games in Doha. AFP

Spinners target third straight vs Moneymen

GAMES TODAY (*Olivarez College Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala vs Toyota Otis
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Magnolia

TOYOTA OTIS WILL AGAIN TRY TO PROVE that speed can make up for lack of ceiling when it battles Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala today in the PBL Silver Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

"We have to use our quickness to beat them," said Toyota Otis coach Louie Alas. "Of course, our outside shooting will also play a crucial role."

The Sparks (2-3) will gun for their third straight win versus the taller and heftier Moneymen (2-4) at 2 p.m.

In the second game at 4, Magnolia (2-4) will also try to rise above its shortcomings against Harbour Centre (2-4).

"Inexperience and lack of chemistry, those are the problems, but we can't always make that as an excuse," said Magnolia coach Koy Banal.

The Spinners will shoot for back-to-back victories after tripping league-leading Hapee-PCU, 79-67, last Tuesday.

"Now that they've tasted how to play as a team and win, I hope they learn to sustain it," said Banal.

Alas, on the other hand, worries about the Moneymen's star centers.

"We have to contain (Ken) Bono and (Doug) Kramer," said Alas. "We can't relax against Cebuana, they're a combination of veterans and rookies."

Point guard Marvin Cruz clinched the Sparks' last victory when he nailed a layup with 1.2 seconds remaining for a 90-88 triumph over the Kettle Korn-UST Tigers.

"We saw what's negative in the team, we tend to relax; but we also played a good endgame," noted Alas after the Sparks improved to fifth with a 3-2 slate.

The Moneymen absorbed an exhausting double-overtime setback to Mail and More, 95-90, last Thursday. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Eagle Ridge member-guest tourney starts

THE EAGLE RIDGE GOLF AND Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite, kicks off a long holiday celebration with the staging of its Invitational member-guest tournament today and tomorrow at three of its four championship courses.

Prizes worth almost P3 million are at stake in the 36-hole tourney including a one million peso bonanza, a top-of-the-line Toyota Avanza, tickets from Philippine Airlines and various brands of golf equipment.

At least 400 members and their guest partners are playing at the Aoki, Norman and Faldo courses of the country's biggest golf club.

Shotgun tee-off times in Class A is 7:30 a.m. at the Faldo course today and 11 a.m. tomorrow and the same times for Class C action at Norman and Aoki. There will be two shotgun tee-offs in Class B at 6 a.m. and noon on both days at Aoki and Faldo.

Providing the prize package for the event are major sponsors Pacsports, WG Golf Construction Corp., G-Shop, GG&A Club Development Inc., Petron, Philippine Airlines, HSBC, Toyota and CICI General Insurance.

The other sponsors are Inquirer Golf, Bacardi, Electrobus Consolidated/Callaway, Champion, Universal Turf Enterprises, Alsons Insurance Brokers Corp., WFMC Trading, DC Starr Gasez, CICI General Insurance, G&W Club Shares, GMA Channel 7, Tanduay, Coca Cola, Rush Fitness Water and Unilever.

More sports events like bowling, badminton and three-point shootout will be held at the Family Clubhouse facilities.

Organizers vowed that most participants will win in the raffle. The lucky ones will get themselves a home theatre system worth more than P150,000 and a trip to Hong Kong for two from PAL.

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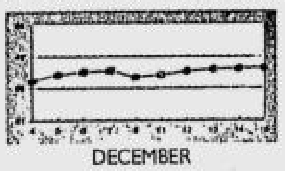
OFW remittances breach $10-B mark

INDICATORS



DECEMBER

₱ 49.365 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 15, 2006

October inflows at all-time high of $1.19B

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOLLARS SENT HOME BY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKers through the banking system surged to an all-time high of $1.19 billion in October, bringing total remittances for the first 10 months past the $10-billion mark, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

Sustaining a double-digit growth, remittances for the month of October jumped 36.7 percent from a year ago while total OFW inflows for the 10-month period of $10.3 billion went up 16.6 percent from the same period in 2005.

"The sustained expansion in remittances reflected the continuing strong demand for Filipino manpower and the financial system's provision of innovative remittance services in response to OFWs' clamor for secure, timely and cost-efficient modes of transfer of funds to their beneficiaries," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement.

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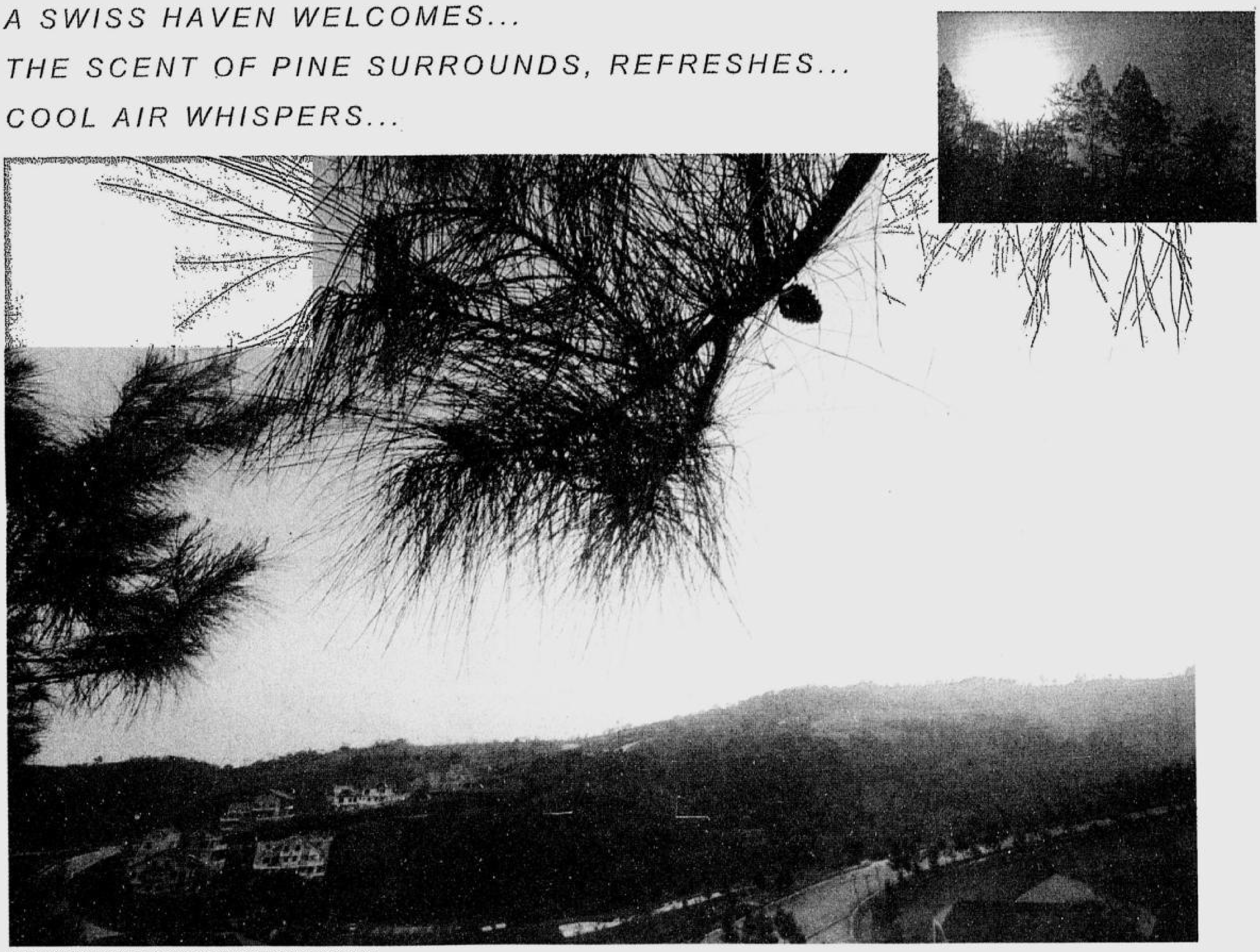

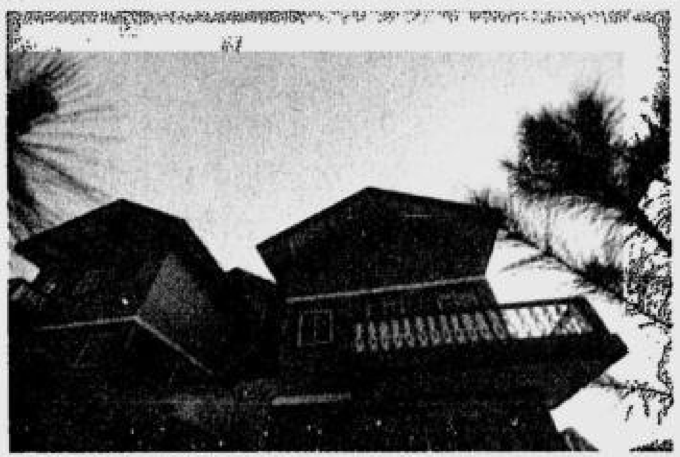

Photos by George Tapan

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Napocor sells bonds worth ₱10B

'06 borrowing program completed

By Michelle V. Remo

STATE-OWNED NATIONAL POWER CORP. (Napocor) sold P10 billion worth of peso-denominated bonds yesterday, completing its financing program for this year.

Nieves Osorio, president of Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), said the funds raised through the bond issue would be used to plug the power firm's budget deficit.

Napocor's borrowing program for 2006 was set at between $500 million and $700 million to cover maturing obligations and help finance its operations.

Yesterday's bond sale followed the issuance in October of $500 million worth of 10-year global bonds.

The bonds sold yesterday have tenors of five and 10 years. The 5-year bonds fetched a rate of 5.25 percent, while the 10-year bonds got 5.875 percent. The rates, according to Osorio, were lower than Napocor's expectations.

Bids for the 5-year bonds reached P14.749 billion.

Napocor officials, guided by the Bureau of the Treasury, accepted P3.68 billion worth of bids, higher than the P3 billion that was expected to be raised through the five-year bond float.

Tenders for the 10-year bonds amounted to P9.294 billion but officials accepted only P6.32 billion, which was still higher the target of P3 billion.

Osorio said Napocor decided to accept more bids than what were originally intended to take advantage of low interest rates.

The low rates and the huge volume of bids reflected the market's confidence in Napocor, which used to encounter difficulties in getting affordable borrowing rates because of its poor financial condition.

OSORIO

Osorio said the move to tap the domestic bond market was a debt management strategy, saying it was more prudent for Napocor to raise its remaining borrowing requirements domestically given the low local interest rates and security from foreign exchange risks.

The market's strong interest in Napocor's bonds was partly attributed to the high level of liquidity in the system. Because the national government had already completed its borrowing program for the year, investors were in the lookout for other investment options.

Shell scheduled to open CNG stations in June

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SHELL GROUP OF COMPANIES HAS firmed up its commitment to start the commercial operation of its compressed natural gas (CNG) mother-daughter stations by June next year.

Shell country chair Edgar Chua said all indications pointed to this schedule, as the security kinks that had hindered the company from operating the CNG refilling stations had been ironed out.

He said preparations were already underway for the start of commercial operations of Shell's mother station in Tabangao, Batangas and daughter station along the South Luzon Expressway in Binan, Laguna.

For his part, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the start of commercial operations of Shell's mother-daugher stations would be good for the government and the public transport sector.

"With the commercial operation of the CNG mother station by June 2007 as committed by Mr. Ed Chua, the government's Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport (NGVPPT) will now finally take off," he said.

The delay in the operation of Shell's mother-daughter station had pushed back the implementation of the NGVPPT, a seven-year pilot program that would peg the price of CNG at P14.52 a liter, less than half the price of diesel, for participating bus operators.

FirstPac in talks with NTT on PLDT bid

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HONG KONG-BASED FIRST PACIFIC CO. Ltd. is in talks with Japan's NTT DoComo Inc. and certain private equity firms for their possible participation in a bid to match the highest offer for the government's stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

"The matter has been presented to them (DoComo) as a strategic investor in PLDT. We have to go to them and say, this particular bloc is available, are you interested?," First Pacific chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said yesterday.

In a press conference held after Metro Pacific Investments Corp.'s listing at the stock exchange yesterday, Pangilinan said First Pacific would likely finance its planned acquisition of the government's stake in PLDT through a combination of internal cash, borrowings and support from private equity funds and NTT DoComo.

First Pacific holds the "right of first refusal" for the shares of Philippine Telecommunication Investment Corp. (PTIC), which owns a 14.4-percent stake in PLDT. First Pacific owns 54 percent of PTIC while the government owns the remaining 46 percent.

The government recently received an offer from Parallax Venture Fund XXVII, owned by Singapore-based Parallax Capital Management, to buy the state's stake in PLDT at P25.2 billion.

Earlier reports indicated that Parallax offer valued PTIC's stake at P2,026 a share. PLDT closed at P2,440 per share yesterday.

Pangilinan was also optimistic that talks with NTT DoComo would be completed soon.

"When DoComo officials came in July this year, they manifested their intention to increase to 20 percent (the company's stake in PLDT) from 14 percent. In due course, an announcement will be made with regards to the purchase. First Pacific, however, must lead the process because it has the right to match whatever offer is made for those shares," he said.

BIR bullish on tax collection performance

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IS optimistic its revenue collection this year would hit or even surpass its P600-billion target.

Initial reports showed that total tax collection as of end-November put the BIR only about P42 billion from this goal.

The P557.77-billion collection in the first 11 months already exceeded by P100 billion the year-ago level of P457.77 billion. This year's figure excludes revenues from treasury bills and bonds, the BIR said in a statement.

Revenue from the BIR's large taxpayer service division in the first 11 months of 2006 amounted to P181.756 billion, exceeding year-ago's P154.543 billion by P27.213 billion.

The agency's excise tax collection in the same period reached P98.645 billion, up from year-ago's P93.168 billion. Impressive performances by the revenue district offices (RDOs) of Makati and Cebu boosted the overall collection efforts of the agency. RDO Makati booked some P19.315 billion in collection in the first 11 months of 2006, besting its year-ago collection of P10.817 billion.

RLC to start third condo project in Fort Bonifacio

REAL ESTATE GIANT ROBINSONS Land Corp. has launched a P1.3-billion condominium project, called the 'Fort Residences,' in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

"It's on a prime location and it has a view of the Manila Golf," RLC president Frederick Go said.

The Fort Residences is RLC's third project in the bustling Fort Bonifacio central business district. The first two are the 38-story Fifth Avenue and 43-story McKinley Park Residences condominium projects.

Construction of the 28-story, 244-unit Fort Residences will start in 2008. It is expected to be completed in 2011.

The Fort Residences will offer single-, two- and three-bedroom flat and loft units. The Loft concept features dining, living and kitchen areas on the first floor while the master bedroom is on the second level. Another bedroom is located on the first level for two-and three-bedroom units.

RLC set the selling prices for its latest project at P3.4 million to P3.7 million for the one-bedroom units (43.4-47.8 square meters), P5.3 million to P7 million for a two-bedroom units (67.7-93 square meters) and P9 million to P12 million for the three -bedroom units (115 to 153 square meters).

The Flat concept offers all amenities on one level. A one-bedroom unit costs P3 million (42 square meters), while a two-bedroom unit may cost between P4.8 million and P5.8 million (67.2 to 77 square meters). A three-bedroom unit may cost P7.9 million.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

CURRENCIES

December 15, 2006

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.760572	1.000000	49.4280
Japan	Yen	0.006455	0.008487	0.4195
United Kingdom	Pound	1.491938	1.961600	96.9580
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097874	0.128685	6.3606
Switzerland	Franc	0.626398	0.823588	40.7083
Canada	Dollar	0.657365	0.864304	42.7208
Singapore	Dollar	0.493461	0.648803	32.0690
Australia	Dollar	0.595966	0.783576	38.7306
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.017593	2.652731	131.1192
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202819	0.266667	13.1808
Brunei	Dollar	0.491866	0.646705	31.9653
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021613	0.028417	1.4046
UAE	Dirham	0.207088	0.272279	13.4582
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.314800	64.9879
Korea	Won	0.000826	0.001086	0.0537
China	Yuan**	0.097279	0.127902	6.3219
Argentina	Peso	0.248756	0.327065	16.1662
Brazil	Real	0.355241	0.467071	23.0864
Denmark	Kroner	0.134185	0.176426	8.7204
India	Rupee	0.017069	0.022442	1.1093
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214639	0.282207	13.9489
Mexico	New Peso	0.070620	0.092851	4.5894
New Zealand	Dollar	0.524786	0.689988	34.1047
Norway	Kroner	0.122606	0.161202	7.9679
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012505	0.016442	0.8127
South Africa	Rand	0.109140	0.143497	7.0928
Sweden	Kroner	0.110510	0.145298	7.1818
Syria	Pound	0.014652	0.019264	0.9522
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023337	0.030684	1.5166

Source: REUTERS' FOREX CLOSING PRICES as of NY Time Dec. 14, 2006

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.   ** Asian Time Closing Rate as of Dec. 14, 2006

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 15, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	80,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44	44	43.5	44	1,046,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63.5	64.5	63.5	64	6,183,000
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	1,820
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.49	0.49	0.47	0.48	3,030,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	79	79	78.5	79	11,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	51	51	50.5	51	1,263,700
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	69	69	69	69	200
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	47	48	15,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	25	25	23.5	24	494,300
Security Bank Corp.	63.5	66	63.5	66	28,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	49.5	49.5	49.5	49.5	2,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	250,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	5	5.3	5	5.3	638,000
First Abacus Financial	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	350,000
Filipino Fund Inc	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	2,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	1,600
Manulife Financial Corp.	1640	1640	1640	1640	1,200
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	174,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	270	270	270	270	7,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2100	2100	2100	2100	530
Ivantage Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.52	379,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
Pnoc Energy Dev. Corp.	4.2	4.35	4.15	4.3	223,310,000
First Gen Corp.	54.5	54.5	52.5	52.5	1,910,900
First Phil Hldgs Corp	60	60	59.5	60	749,800
Manila Electric Co. A	54	54	52.5	53	350,400
Manila Electric Co. B	55	55	53	53	1,405,500
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.8	9.9	9.8	9.8	1,211,000
Petron Corp.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.1	4,620,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.28	0.32	0.28	0.3	2,360,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.2	1.08	1.14	4,517,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	6,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.75	21.25	20.75	21.25	65,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41	41	40.5	41	697,500
Pancake House Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	50,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.65	2.6	2.65	219,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	120,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65.5	66	69,000
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71	70.5	71	172,600
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.16	2.3	2.14	2.22	4,126,000
Universal Robina Corp	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.5	222,900
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.12	1.14	1.1	1.14	8,643,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	251,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.3	1,281,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.6	8.1	7.6	8	5,092,000
Phil Nat'l Const Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	2,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	261,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc	5.1	5.2	5	5.2	3,618,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.52	0.62	0.52	0.62	180,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.72	0.74	0.71	0.74	34,490,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.195	0.205	0.195	0.195	17,220,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.4	150,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	83,000,000
Ayala Corp.	487.5	492.5	487.5	492.5	137,870
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.67	0.68	3,210,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6.9	6.9	6.6	6.8	9,212,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.3	32,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	25,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.8	2.85	2.8	2.85	1,106,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.39	66,340,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.011	0.0095	0.011	519,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.98	1.06	0.98	1.04	11,400,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.92	1.92	51,000
Atn Holdings Inc. B	2	2	2	2	3,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9.5	9	9.5	35,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.24	2.26	2.2	2.2	4,558,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	2,077,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	1,290,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.92	1.88	1.88	2,375,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	9	9.6	9	9.5	921,000
Keppel Holdings	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	39,000
Medco Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	40,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	300,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	240,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.56	1.58	1,417,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	15,400,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	1,700,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.65	0.67	0.65	0.67	1,460,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.16	22,760,000
Sm Investments Corp.	300	300	295	300	617,990
South China Resources Inc	0.94	1	0.94	1	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	30,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.22	0.24	0.22	0.235	55,110,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.13	3,120,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.75	15	14.5	15	11,740,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	40,000
Belle Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	8,252,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.7	1.78	1.66	1.68	251,000
Cityland Development Corp	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.41	0.42	0.41	0.42	3,400,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.3	3.15	3.3	5,186,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.33	2,140,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.55	14,990,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	2,400,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.82	1.84	8,620,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.42	2.44	2.42	2.44	60,000
Interport Res.	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	327,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	97,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	455,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.5	5,710,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	60,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.24	2.26	2.22	2.26	21,983,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	2,290,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	15.75	16	15.75	15.75	4,064,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.71	0.72	0.7	0.7	27,390,000
Sm Development Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	1,139,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.8	7,467,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.115	0.11	0.11	1,620,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	21	21	21	21	52,800
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	20,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.82	1.94	1.82	1.9	25,014,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1250	1250	1240	1245	10,810
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.2	7,087,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2420	2465	2420	2440	234,190
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.18	9,710,000
Imperial Res.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	200,000
Ionics Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	404,000
Ipvg Corp.	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.1	518,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	5,800,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	5,000
Transpacific Broadband	5.1	5.2	4.65	5.1	1,267,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	52,800,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	980,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.24	405,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19	19	19	19	50,600
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	50,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	505,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	1,800,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.59	0.6	0.58	0.6	4,350,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	1,000
Ipeople Inc	3	3	3	3	187,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.1	2.06	2.06	328,000
Paxys Inc.	18	19.25	18	19.25	311,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	40	40	40	40	5,600
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	1,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6	6.1	6	6	4,961,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.1	506,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	46,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.8	9.7	8.8	9.7	12,186,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.6	9.4	9.6	566,000
Benguet Corp. B	25	25	25	25	10,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.06	24,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	670,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	280,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.022	429,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	174,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	159,200,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.15	4.25	4.15	4.2	2,494,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19	19	19	19	85,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.7	0.77	0.7	0.76	13,180,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.5	1.56	1.46	1.54	84,669,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.28	0.31	0.28	0.29	18,650,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	254,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.97	1.02	0.97	1.02	640,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	80,000
Pnoc Exploration Corp.-B	17	17	17	17	1,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10	10.5	10	10.5	160,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	400

Meralco one with the nation in celebrating a safe and joyous Christmas

The Christmas season becomes livelier and more enchanting when homes and streets are adorned with bright lights and colorful decors. In the midst of the Christmas rush and celebration, however, people sometimes fail to take notice of the hazards around them. Because of this, Meralco, in connection with its *Maliwanag ang Pasko* campaign, has advised the public to observe safety precautions for the holiday season.

Meralco Marketing Head Mike Lopez said, "We at Meralco would like send our warmest Christmas greetings to all. In time for the holiday celebrations, we also would like to give our customers some safety tips."

Meralco reminds its customers to inspect their Christmas lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in insulation, broken or cracked sockets and excessive wires before putting them up.

The company also advised the public to use only Christmas lights that bear the seal of the Bureau of Product Standards. To protect electrical wires from damage when trying to hold the lights in place, it is better to string them through hooks or insulated staples instead of holding them with nails or tacks. It is also recommended to no longer use Christmas lights with damaged wires.

Lopez said, "Our customers should also make sure that they only use lights designed for outdoor use when decorating the exterior of their houses. Likewise, they should unplug the electrical connection first when replacing light bulbs or fuses. Moreover, do not install electric lights on metallic Christmas trees."

Meralco also reminded its customers not to smoke or place lighted candles near Christmas trees, as doing so may cause fire. All combustible materials like curtains and carpets must also be kept at a safe distance from electric light sources. Moreover, the decorations themselves, such as the Christmas trees, should be non-combustible or flame-retardant.

It is likewise not advisable to overload wall outlets and extension cords, since the excess load might result in heating that can cause fire. Meralco also reminded its customers not to link more than three Christmas light strands, unless the directions indicate that it is safe to do so. Make sure to periodically check the wires, too; they should not be warm to the touch. Finally, be sure also to turn off all Christmas lights and electrical decorations before leaving the house or before going to bed.

Maliwanag ang Pasko

Lopez said, "While it is nice to have all these Christmas lights and decors, it is still better to celebrate the season safely with our families and friends."

ADVT.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2006 **BUSINESS** B1

Bank lending up 11.1% in October

By Doris C. Dumlao

LENDING BY COMMERCIAL BANKS EXpanded by 11.1 percent in October from a year ago, its strongest pace since May last year, indicating a rising momentum in credit activity, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The growth in lending, which brought total outstanding loans to P1.66 trillion in October, marked a further improvement from the annual growth of 6.1 percent in September, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. reported yesterday.

On a month-on-month basis, commercial bank loans rose by 4.3 percent, reversing a 0.01-percent contraction in the previous month.

This developed as the banking sector, which accounts for more than 80 percent of the total resources of the financial system, stepped up efforts to unload bad assets to free up more funds for lending over the last 18 months.

The growth in commercial bank lending in October was driven by loans to the financial institutions, real estate and business services (FIREBS) sector; the community, social and personal services sector, and the wholesale and retail trade sector.

The significant increase in loans classified under financial intermediation was linked to banks' participation in the open market operations of the BSP.

"The data also showed momentum in lending

BANK/ B7

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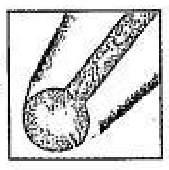

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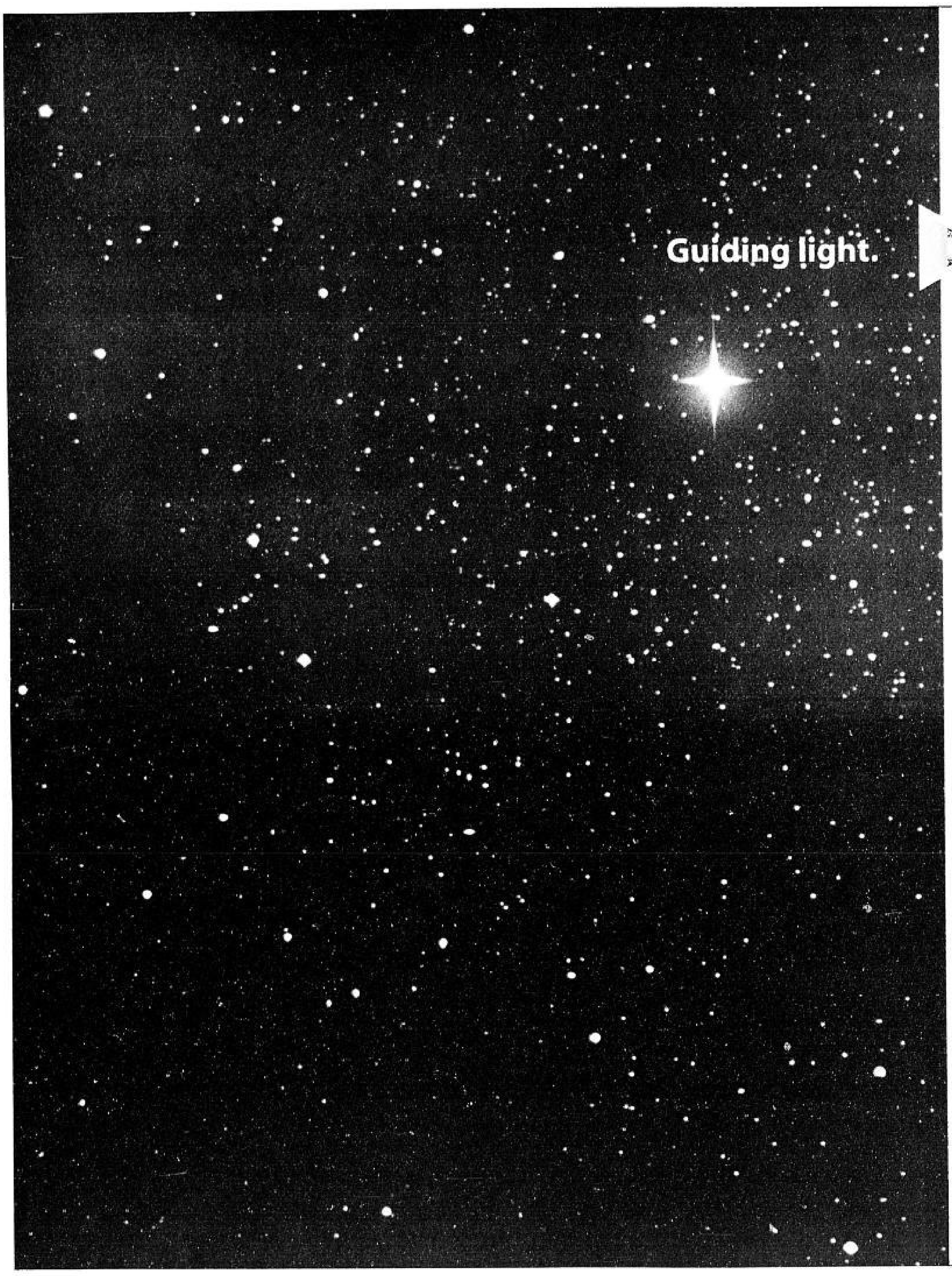
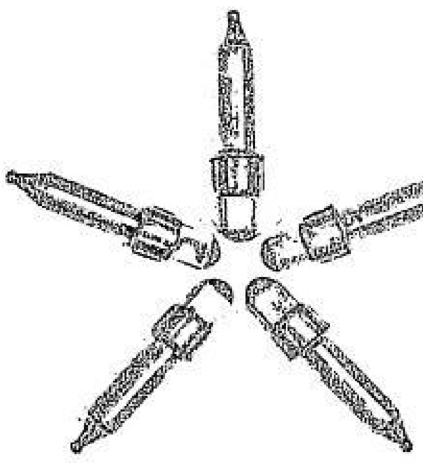


This Christmas season, despite the many lights around us, may we always look to that light that leads us home.



Maliwanag ang Pasko.

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4.2M Pinoys suffer significant hearing loss

By Tessa R. Salazar

FILIPINO HEARING EXperts are urging people to lend an ear: modern electronic gadgets such as Ipods, cell phones, personal music players and MP3 players are posing certain risks to their owners' hearing.

Ears, nose and throat specialists also quote a 2004 edition of the Gallaudet Encyclopedia for deaf people and deafness indicating that there are 4.2-million Filipinos who have significant hearing loss.

Significant hearing loss includes moderate, severe and profound hearing loss. People with mild hearing loss, however, are still considered able to communicate adequately.

Hearing experts quantify significant hearing loss as 40 db (Decibel is a unit used to express the intensity of a sound wave) and above.

Varying sound levels

Dr. Josefino G. Hernandez, chairman, Organizing Committee, 50th Annual Convention of the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery), says there are varying sound levels. Exposing oneself to 85 db and above of noise continuously for eight hours can already affect hearing. Continuous hearing exposure for 90 db for four hours and 95 db for two hours can already damage hearing.

Other comparable environments and their sound levels are ordinary conversations (up to 60 db); noisy restaurants (80 db); rock concerts (100 db); thunder (120 db); sound produced by shotgun (140 db); and a jet taking off (150 db).

"If these sounds are produced in certain durations, these can affect hearing," he says.

The normal hearing threshold is measured by decibels. While 25 db and lower is normal, 26 to 40 may signify mild hearing loss, 40 to 60 moderate hearing loss; 60 to 80 severe, and 80 beyond as profound. Often, hearing loss is a gradual progression, except if caused by sudden explosion (as what is called "acoustic trauma").

Advocacy campaign

Hernandez notes that his group has embarked on an advocacy campaign, as 50 percent of hearing loss is preventable.

Dr. Charlotte Chiong, vice president, Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, says that aside from gadgets that can significantly affect hearing, attending rock concerts that can be as noisy as 110 db can damage hearing as much.

"Fifteen years ago we brought medical students to a disco to measure decibels and half of those subjects, after coming out of the disco, had abnormal ringing in their ear. Hair cells were unduly exposed to the noise. It takes at least 9 hours for you to recover from something like that," Chiong says.

Temporary damage, to a point

Experts note that (abnormal ringing in the ear) can be temporary, but with repeated exposure the damage can become permanent. They explain that the problem with hearing impairment is that it affects the high frequency region.

She also adds that noise can "preferentially" damage hearing for high frequency sounds, while some other problems such as too much pressure in the inner ear can cause damage to hearing in the low frequency sounds.

She also says some patients are genetically predisposed to mid-frequency hearing loss.

Experts note that for a child with hearing impairment to develop good speech and language, intervention should be done before the age of six months. That also means the condition must be diagnosed by the age of three months for the intervention to happen.

'Say that again?'

"When you have to ask somebody to raise their voice so you could hear them, or when after using your music player that ringing sound persists, then you're probably at risk for hearing loss," Chiong.

Experts recommend a five-minute hearing questionnaire by the American Academy of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery (AOHNS) to check if one needs to go to an ENT doctor for a hearing evaluation.

Hearing experts express concern on the exact number of Filipinos suffering hearing loss, saying that there was no government structure in terms of provision services for the hearing impaired. There were also no tax exemptions for importing hearing aids or cochlear implants, and no provision for hearing screening.

They stress that neighboring countries had already embarked on a universal hearing screening system.

"We have a newborn screening here but we only test for metabolic screening for mental retardation.... Hearing loss is more prevalent than those diseases. We have a law that mandates newborn screening for diseases that are less common than hearing loss," Chiong says. She adds that only a handful of private hospitals offer universal newborn screening for hearing.

The worldwide incidence of hearing loss is 250 million. This is expected to increase to 750 million by 2015.

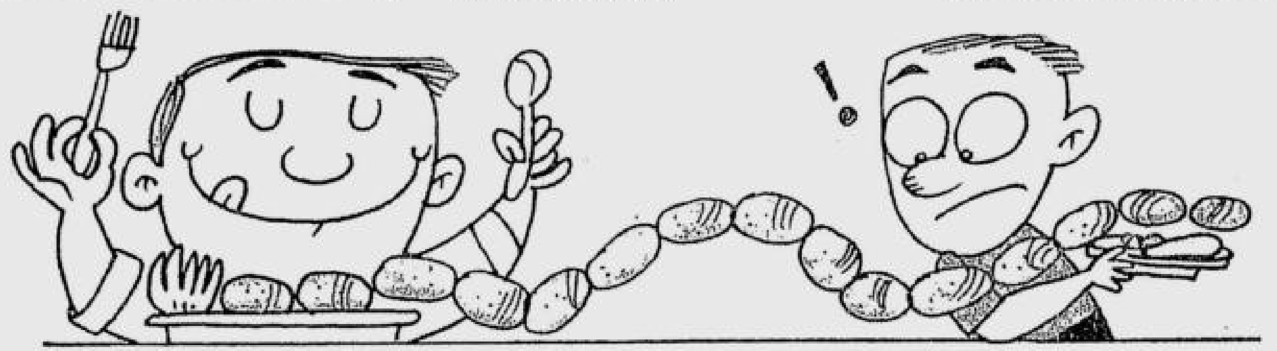
How to care for your ear

ENT DOCTORS SAY THERE ARE A number of reasons people ask for their help, and one of these is how to treat ear infections, or trauma to their ears.

- **Impacted serumen.** Dr. Charlotte Chiong, vice president of the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, says it's a bad habit to clean the insides of ears with cotton buds, as you would just push the serumen inwards, causing impacted serumen. Clean only the opening and outer layers of the ears with tissue, wet towel or cotton buds. The most common hearing loss in schoolchildren is impacted serumen or impacted wax, or what is called in the vernacular as *tutuling matigas*.
- **Colds.** If colds are still present in two to three days in children, they should be brought to the doctor. This is especially true for children below the age of 7.
- **Hearing test for kids.** For the past two years, the Philippine National Ear Institute of UP-PGH has been training public school nurses from Dep-Ed how to examine the ears using a penlight and test the hearing by means of a tuning fork.

When you vibrate the tuning fork on your hand, you can produce a very accurate sound that's been measured to hover around 50 db. When the child does not hear a vibrating tuning fork placed three inches from his or her ear, the child has a certain degree of hearing loss.

—Tessa R. Salazar



Eat, drink and be merry, but…

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

WHAT IS CHRISTMAS WITHOUT festive celebrations, replete with food of all kinds? However, statistics show that food-related diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes, are on the rise, not just in the West, but also in Asia. Type 2 diabetes is dangerous, especially since it is often undetectable in the early stages.

Diabetes is a condition characterized by high blood sugar levels and undesirable changes in blood fats. Type 2 diabetes is the most common type of diabetes. According to the Asian Food Information Centre (Afic), type 2 diabetes accounts for 85 to 95 percent of all diabetes cases. This disease usually occurs in adulthood, but more children and adolescents are now afflicted.

Afic (info@afic.org) is a non-profit organization based in Singapore, whose mission to provide science-based information on nutrition, health and food safety to consumers in Asia. I acknowledge the help of Afic in giving the facts used in this article.

India has the highest number of people with diabetes in the world (35.5 million), followed by the People's Republic of China (23.8 million). In 2003, 39.3 million people in the Southeast Asian region were estimated to be diabetic, roughly 6 percent of the population.

Symptoms of type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes advances very slowly, sometimes without external symptoms. One in 3 of those diagnosed with diabetes has already developed complications, and worse, many effects may be irreversible.

What are the most common external symptoms? Excessive thirst, frequent passing of urine, hunger, unintentional weight loss, lack of energy, blurred vision, slow healing of cuts or bruises, tingling or loss of feelings in hands or feet, recurring infection of the skin, gum, vagina, or urinary tract.

Who is at risk? First, those with a family history of type 2 diabetes. If one or more family members has the disease, then the risk is significantly increased. Second, overweight people. Studies show that more than 8 out of 10 diabetics are either overweight or obese. Third, inactive persons. Being physically active can reduce the chance of developing type 2 diabetes by half. Fourth, older people. One in 5 persons over 65 years old has type 2 diabetes.

Early detection is essential. People who are overweight or over 45 years old can request a simple diabetes test from the doctor every year. Those already diagnosed with type 2 diabetes should regulate blood glucose, blood fats and blood pressure. Medication may be needed, but lifestyle changes, such as a healthy diet and regular exercise, are as important.

Prevention

Those who are overweight should try to reduce excess body fat, especially fat accumulated around the abdominal area. Use a tape measure midway between the lowest rib and the upper part of the hip bone. Waist circumference of less than 90 cm for men and less than 80 cm for women indicates a lower risk. The risk increases proportionately with increasing girth.

Active use of muscle increases the muscle's ability to absorb glucose and to use insulin. A combination of aerobic exercise, strength training (such as weight training) and flexibility exercise (such as stretching) is recommended.

Exercise does not need to be expensive. Park at the far end of the parking lot. Do some gardening at home. Play with your children or grandchildren. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Wash your car.

I know this is hard to do during Christmas, but try to choose foods with high fiber and low fat. For instance, whole grain foods are carbohydrates that are slowly absorbed, which limits increase of blood glucose levels and reduces insulin demand. Good choices include brown rice, oats, whole grain bread, soba noodles, mung bean vermicelli, most beans, nuts and bulgur.

Use unsaturated fats instead of saturated and trans fats. Unsaturated fats, such as olive, peanut, sunflower, or corn oil help prevent type 2 diabetes. Avoid junk foods and other snacks with trans-fats. As for coconut oil, though it has saturated fat, researchers are now increasingly convinced that it has many health benefits.

Have a merry and healthy Christmas.

Contact Queena N. Lee-Chua at blessbook@yahoo.com.

Money matters

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

WITH CHRISTMAS FAST APPROACHING and reconstruction efforts underway to recover from the recent typhoons, it seems appropriate to discuss the results of a recent study regarding money and how people behave depending on how much of it they have. Most people would say that having money is a good thing because it gives them the ability to provide for themselves. Previous studies have also shown that money doesn't necessarily buy happiness.

According to the study done by Kathleen Vohs of the University of Minnesota and her colleagues from the University of Florida and the University of British Columbia, people who have money are more self-sufficient, so they tend to focus more on achieving their own personal goals instead of spending time fostering relationships with others.

Money and self-sufficiency

Dr. Vohs, a marketing professor, also holds a doctorate in psychological and brain sciences. In these experiments correlating money and self-sufficiency, she and her colleagues worked with reminders of money such as play money or pictures of money rather than actual currency.

The study, which appeared in the Nov. 17 issue of the journal Science, defines self-sufficiency as the state in which people make the effort to obtain personal goals and prefer to be apart from others. The results of the 9 experiments Vohs et al. carried out confirm this characterization.

One of the experiments divided the participants into 2 groups: the "high money" volunteers were videotaped reading several passages aloud about having grown up in well-to-do surroundings while the "low money" group was videotaped reading about having grown up in reduced financial circumstances. Each participant was then asked to complete a geometric puzzle the researchers knew was unsolvable. After several minutes of working alone, an experimenter would enter the room with a companion simply introduced as one of the participants who'd already finished the problem and then leave the two people alone.

Sense of self sufficiency

Vohs et al. measured the participant's sense of self-sufficiency by the amount of time it took them to ask the other person for help. They found that compared to the "low money" group, the "high money" participants preferred to work on their own a bit longer before asking for help.

In another experiment, Vohs et al. divided the participants into 3 groups: "high money," "low money" and control and had an experimenter play the game Monopoly with each participant for several minutes. After the game, the experimenter left $4,000 of Monopoly money in sight though not in the hands of the "high money" group.

Applying the same conditions, the "low money" group received $200 in Monopoly money. The control group received no funds. Left alone in the room with the money in the line of sight, each participant then saw an experimenter carrying several pencils enter and trip while walking across the room.

Willingness to help

This time, Vohs et al. measured each participant's willingness to help based on the number of pencils they picked up. As the act itself did not require any special skills, they were surprised to find that the "low money" and control groups picked up more pencils than did the "high money" group.

These results, along with similar findings from the other experiments carried out, led Vohs et al. to the following interesting conclusion: "Relative to people not reminded of money, people reminded of money reliably performed independent but socially insensitive actions."

This does not mean that people cannot be generous; indeed that contradicts people's actions during this time of the year when the holiday spirit moves them. Rather, it suggests that people who think about money are more inclined to focus on what they can do to get more for themselves. Vohs et al. noted that many cultures consider money to be "both the greatest good and evil"; money, as they've shown, influences social behavior, which in turn is affected by the society involved itself.

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

A SUPERTYPHOON AND PERsisting weather disturbances just a few weeks before Christmas? This is most unusual. December is usually the month when we invite our relatives and friends abroad to come home for a visit because the weather is supposed to be perfect; temperature is just right; humidity is not a problem; heavy rains and typhoons are completely unheard of.

But this time, someone must have changed the script. The climate in the Pacific and all over the world has gone haywire. There's a lot of uncertainty of what's going to happen next, but a lot of clarity in the disaster caused by nature's temperamental behavior.

Many people still consider global warming an abstract thing of no actual significance; and more the product of a paranoid mind obsessed with scientific pessimism. Well then, in practical terms, supertyphoons and other intense weather disturbances, in the oddest month like December, is what global warming is all about.

Like urgent warning

In our article on global warming in this column (PDI, Nov. 11, 2006), we noted the unusually warm weather we had intermittently last month, seemingly ominous of something bad that was going to happen. It was like the urgent warning of a child with high-grade fever nearing tipping point.

A day after the supertyphoon, an old man in our town in Buhi, the hardest-hit town in Camarines Sur paralleling the devastation of the whole province of Albay, said in the local dialect: "Nothing but the mightiest evil forces of nature could have caused this. In my whole life, there was never a typhoon as strong and devastating as this one." He would have surely felt dismayed had he realized that global warming is not the mighty evil force; but the effect of man's folly. It is the whirlwind that we are left with no choice but to reap for sowing the wind, partly by ignorance, but mainly due to apathy. We can never escape that immutable law of nature and the Bible which says: "If you sow the wind, prepare to reap the whirlwind."

We sow the wind every time we burn a lot of fuel (oil, coal or wood), cut down trees wantonly instead of planting more trees, leave lights on even if we don't need it; pollute the air with our car's and factories' exhausts; hence causing a buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere.

Global warming

The resulting "whirlwind" can be so bad the victims won't even know what hit them. Kerry

SOW/B5

Screening, early diagnosis key to dealing with cancer

By Charles E. Buban

BY DELIVERING high doses of radiation directly to cancer cells, oncologist Gorospe (right) explained that an **IMRT** machine (background) could spare surrounding healthy tissues and thus, increase the rate of tumor control while significantly reducing adverse side effects.

FIGHTING CANCER IS NOT a simple matter of thinking positively, wishing it away and saying, "Hi doc, cure me." Rather, it is a matter of knowledge and in the case of St. Luke's Cancer Institute in Quezon City, screening and early diagnosis through state-of-the-art technology.

"Dealing with cancer, until recently, has been focused on treatment of already existing, clinically detectable cancer cells. However, this strategy is not always the best in dealing with most types of cancer. Even if the cancer cells are diagnosed when they are small the process may be already well advanced and may be beyond a doctor's capability to eradicate all of them," reminded oncologist Charity Charisse Viado-Gorospe, who is the institute's executive officer.

Indeed, screening and early diagnosis could do more to reduce the impact of cancer on the lives of individuals than cancer treatment programs are able to accomplish.

Identify patients

"Cancer screening and earlier diagnosis has a major importance in the survival of patients with many cancers. The key is to identify patients at increased risk of cancer development at a stage when interventions will be most successful," explained Gorospe.

She said a feature common to most of the more prevalent cancers—those of the skin, breast, cervix, endometrium, ovary, testis, colon and rectum, prostate and lung—is that diagnosis generally is better, treatment is more successful, and morbidity and mortality are lower if the cancer cells are detected while still localized.

To help doctors like Gorospe, St. Luke's Medical Center acquired state-of-the-art technology to diagnose and treat cancer like the positron emission tomography (PET) scanner, the only hospital to have this machine that allows accurate imaging of different body organs to search for and keep track of cancer.

The hospital also offers low-dose computed tomography screening that detects, for example, tiny spots or nodules in the lungs before they could be seen in a regular chest X-ray. "These tiny spots or nodules may be an early stage of lung cancer. By being able to detect and confirm these cancer cells early, doctors can act more quickly and decisively thereby giving patients a greater chance of cure," Gorospe said.

Nathaniel de Vera, the hospital's Positron Emission Tomography Center department manager and medical physicist shared that St. Luke's is among the few centers in the world with a cyclotron, which produces radioactive tracers that PET scanners use to show up a cancer, its stage, show whether a lump is cancer or not and if it has spread to other parts of the body, decide the best treatment for the cancer, show how well chemotherapy is working and even show the difference between scar tissue and active cancer tissue.

Introduced breakthroughs

Established in 1989, St. Luke's Cancer Institute introduced several breakthroughs in cancer diagnosis and treatment in the country, which at that time were only available in highly developed Western countries.

These include the country's first, like the high-dose-rate brachytherapy (in 1991) that is used in treating some gynecologic cancers as well as esophageal cancer, lung cancer and prostate cancer; computerized linear accelerator or Linac (in 1993), a highly advanced device that emits a beam of cancer killing radiation (the hospital now has three of this device); as well as stereotactic radiosurgery (in 1996), a noninvasive means to deliver precise dose of high-energy radiation to a lesion located within the skull, head, or neck.

"The hospital also has a three-dimensional conformal radiation therapy and intensity-modulated radiation therapy (acquired in 2002 and currently has two of the machine), the most advanced cancer-fighting technology to date in which radiation is broken up into thousands of tiny beams that enter the body from many angles and intersect on the tumor. They allow precise external beam radiotherapy treatments, resulting in a higher dose to the tumor and a lower dose to the surrounding tissues," Gorospe said.

She added that St. Luke's is also equipped with a Linac-based conformal stereotactic radiosurgery (in 2002) that provides accurate dosing and delivery of radiation beam (resulting in optimal treatment and minimal risk to neighboring tissues) and a respiratory gated radiation therapy (in 2003), a new technology that synchronizes radiation treatment to a patient's breathing pattern, thereby improving the accuracy of radiation treatment and reducing damage to surrounding healthy organs.

Recognized

"With services provided by the institute—early detection, curative and palliative treatment, supportive care, rehabilitation programs as well as cancer screening, patient education and cancer prevention—the hospital is accredited by the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center of New York City, the oldest and largest cancer center in the world.

Gorospe explained that benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to cancer treatment are now well understood. "St. Luke's multidisciplinary team approach is one of the best models for patient care in the country and perhaps in the region. Specialists from a wide variety of disciplines—pain medicine, neurology, nephrology, cardiology, gastroenterology, rehabilitation medicine, pulmonary medicine, as well as psychology and oncology nursing, and nutrition department—coordinate the best treatment plans based on the most current knowledge," Gorospe said.

"Also, in line with the hospital's thrust of supporting medical expertise with a strong clinical research program, the institute works closely with scientists and researchers of St. Luke's Research and Biotechnology Division in conducting basic and clinical studies on the major forms of cancer and blood disorders (cancer of the colon and rectum, stomach, liver, nose and throat, breast, as well non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, leukemia, and thalassemia)," she added.

Indeed, with the rising cost of drugs for cancer, screening and early diagnosis becomes even more important considering that in many instances, advances in therapy have only marginal improvements in reducing deaths compared with the advantage of avoiding the diagnosis of an advanced cancer.

Sow the wind . . .

From page B4

Emanuel, climate specialist from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, contends that because of global warming, the storms are expected to grow larger and reach higher maximum wind speeds than in the past. In his study on this natural phenomenon published in the journal Nature, Emmanuel concludes that today's storms, on average, release far more energy than their predecessors did three decades ago.

Suzana Camargo, another climate specialist at Columbia University in New York, agrees with Emanuel's findings and warns that these should be taken seriously. She made her own study previously showing the increase in the energy of typhoons when tropical Pacific temperatures rose by several degrees Celsius as a result of cyclical El Niño weather events. "You don't have more typhoons; you have more intense ones. You have supertyphoons," she warns.

Lifesaving shot

The people in our hometown Buhi and all of Bicol can certainly relate to that. Speaking of Buhi which was the most devastated town in Camarines Sur with 95 percent of all agricultural crops and sources of livelihood destroyed, it got a lifesaving shot in the arm when the national government, courtesy of Social Welfare Secretary Espie Cabral, sent 300 sacks of rice early this week. Mayor Diones Belza is so grateful for the assistance which was expedited by Cabral within 24 hours after learning of the plight of the typhoon victims in this small town.

Buhi is usually neglected in the distribution of relief goods during typhoons, probably because of its remote location. Mayor Diones says it's like starting from scratch to restore the beauty of this rustic town made famous by Lake Buhi and tabios, once documented as the smallest fish in the world. For those who would like to give any form of assistance to the Buhi victims and for the rehabilitation of the town, you may contact Mayor Belza directly at 0927-5692435 or 0917-8868409. Sowing a good deed can make one reap the gentle soothing breeze that brings more luck to the giver.

I can't always prevent her from making mistakes. But I can certainly advise her about those which may have deadly consequences.

Today's young generation can acquire a virus that can lead to cervical cancer.
G.U.A.R.D. against it.

Gather information. Millions of young women may acquire a virus they don't even know about. It's called Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and certain types can cause cervical cancer.[1,2] Find out more. Call hotline numbers 878-6338 or 1-800-1-888-6737 for inquiries.

Understand the risks for acquiring the HPV infection that can lead to cervical cancer and be in a better position to discuss the disease with your daughter.

Acknowledge the truth. In the Philippines, cervical cancer was the second leading cause of cancer death in women in 2004.[3] In 2005, 7,277 new cases and 3,807 deaths due to cervical cancer were estimated to have occurred (approximately 10 Filipino women deaths each day due to cervical cancer).[3]

Reach out to other mothers. You can help prevent the development of cervical cancer or better yet help protect other people's daughters by spreading this information.

Discuss prevention. Your Ob-Gynecologist or your daughter's Pediatrician can discuss ways to help prevent cervical cancer.

References:
[1] Uterine Cancer in: Harrison's Internal Medicine 2006, accessed online at http://www.accessmedicine.com
[2] Pagliusi S. WHO-Vaccine Research and Development. Downloaded from http://www.who.int/vaccines/en/hpvrd.shtml
[3] Laudico A, Esteban D, Redaniel T et al. Philippine Cancer Facts and Estimates 2005. Publication by the Philippine Cancer Society, Inc.

MOMS ON G.U.A.R.D.
AGAINST CERVICAL CANCER

A Health Information Program of
MSD
11-2007-GRD-06-PH-5016-AD

GOING DIRECT

How Dell Is Enhancing the Experience of Technology... One Call at a Time.

It wasn't so long ago when a student from the University of Texas made the ultimate affirmation of his belief in selling personal computers directly to customers. With just a thousand dollars in hand, Michael Dell founded a company which, above all, persistently focused on delivering the best possible customer experience.

That was in 1984.

Uniquely enabled by its direct business model, Dell now sells more systems globally than any other computer company in the world, placing it no. 25 on the Fortune 500 and topping the list in 2005 of "Most Admired Companies."

Nearly one of every five standards-based computer systems sold in the world today is a Dell; for more than two decades, indeed, the company has revolutionized the industry to make computing accessible to customers around the globe, including businesses, institutional organizations and individual customers. This truly global reach only indicates that Dell's direct approach is relevant across product lines, regions and customer segments. The phenomenon has since become known as "The Dell Effect" – a fundamental philosophy and a unique environment responsible for the company's success in creating leading value for customers and investors.

The Soul of Dell

Since its foundation more than 20 years ago, Dell has been characterized by a unique environment that serves as a guide for the company's actions. It's called "The Soul of Dell," where everyone in the team works together and brings Dell values into action.

- **Customers** – Dell believes in creating loyal customers by providing a superior experience through efficiency and operational excellence.

- **Direct Relationships** – Dell believes strongly in fostering open communications, building effective relationships, and treating people fairly, openly and respectfully.

- **Global Citizenship** – Dell believes in participating responsibly in the global marketplace. The company is strong in its commitment to understand and respect laws, values and cultures, and continually strives to promote a healthy business climate to every community, both personally and organizationally.

Country Manager **Mike Garrison**

- **Team Success** – Dell's highly skilled team is its greatest asset, and the company cultivates and rewards leadership, diversity, and contributions to the success of then entire team.

- **Winning** – Dell is known for its passion for excellence, in leading the markets it serves, and in providing superior shareholder value over time.

Enhancing the Customer Experience

Dell offers a variety of customized services and support programs tailored to meet specific customer requirements. Recently, the company announced the plans of an incremental $150 million investment to improve and enhance Customer Experience. Piloting new and innovative support strategies to deliver world-class service and support excellence, Dell is unique because it applies first-rate operations expertise and a "no excuses" approach to the challenges of IT services delivery.

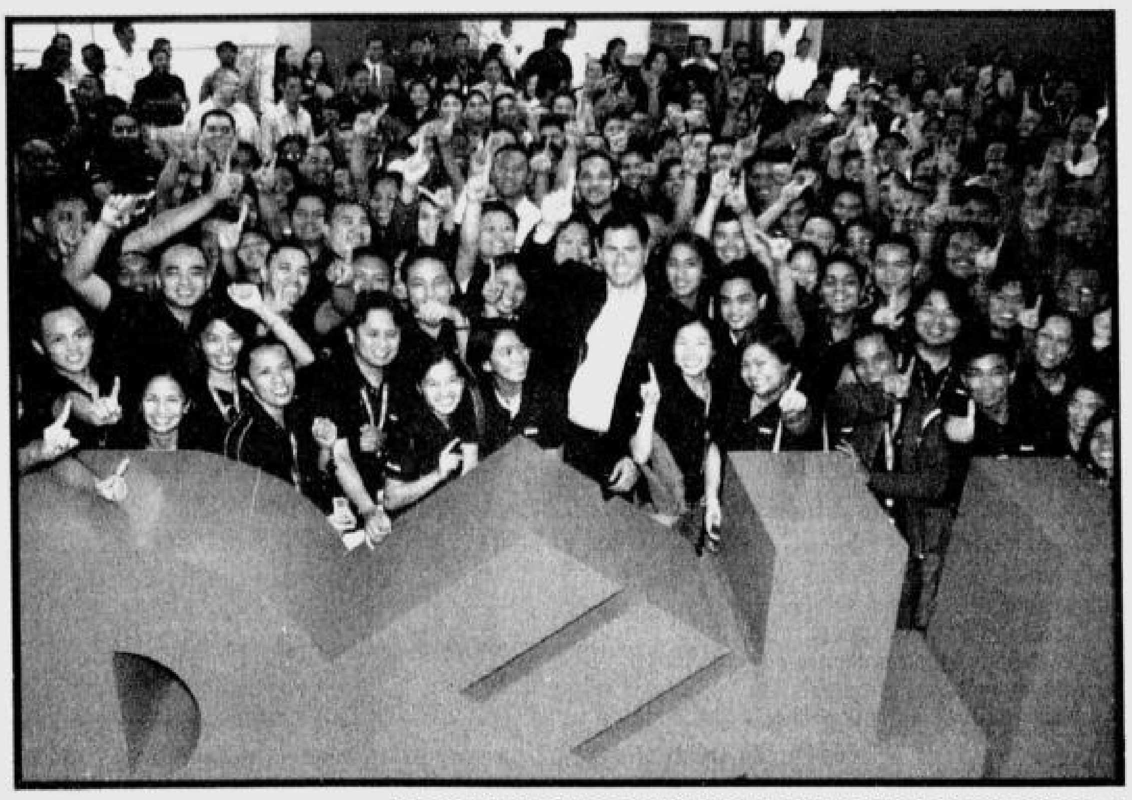
At the heart of these services is an array of advanced processes and tools to monitor events, dispatch parts, and help technicians, all of which help increase the quality of the services delivery of the company. Moreover, Dell is investing in the capabilities of its support professionals through industry-leading training and certification programs.

Dell in the Philippines

Since the early 2006 inception of its first customer support center in SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City, Dell Philippines has continued to exceed its growth plans in the country. Led by Country Manager Michael Garrison, Dell runs one of the most robust customer support operations in the Philippines by inspiring the best talent to keep raising the bar of service. Furthermore, it is consistently pioneering processes and practices for superior frontline technical support, call planning and staffing.

The second site is at Cyber / commercial complex Eastwood City, Libis, the heart of information technology in the Philippines. Dell's growth is a reflection of the simple goal all the company's professionals have – to keep things moving.

Keeping things moving means constant evolution. And constant evolution articulates the essence of Dell's global and international employment experience, serving to embrace the best of what Dell has to offer by way of growth, development, challenge, and change.



ACROSS THE GLOBE AND IN THE PHILIPPINES. DELL'S NO. 1
Michael Dell with the employees of Dell Philippines at the Pasay site inauguration.

This is why, at the heart of every Dell career, there is an infusion of a mobile and driven culture that continuously strives for improvement, and permeated by an ethos of unparalleled speed and flexibility. Motivated by the team and fueled by the success around them, Dell's professionals are always encouraging each other to develop better solutions and reach higher goals.

This mindset sets Dell apart from every other company out there, and consistently opens up a world of possibilities – for customers, team members, shareholders...and everyone else.

Careers at Dell

A career at Dell offers more than just a pay check. The company's success springs from the greatness of its team members, and that's because Dell has found the best way to provide a unique and valuable work-life experience.

An individual's development is part of the value of a Dell career, because as its business continues to grow and evolve, the value of exceptional leadership is a critical element. The company offers the chance to make a real difference to one's self and to the world. It's called the Total Value of working at Dell.

A Winning Culture

When one joins Dell, he is joining a team that respects every individual - a team that believes that the only way to win is with integrity. Dell values all relationships, and it strives to make a difference – to Dell's customers, team members, shareholders, suppliers, and the global community.

A Global Leader

Regardless of where one is coming from, Dell's industry leadership and solid reputation offer exceptional opportunities for growth and success. Its continued global growth – in financial performance, market share and product line expansion – will mean even more opportunities in the future.

People Development

One's learning, development and professional growth are important to Dell's continued success. Its ongoing development planning and performance management process will enhance one's effectiveness. Its networking, coaching and mentoring, and formal learning programs will help one achieve his full potential – which is good for your career, and good for Dell.

Dell Rewards

The company's pay and benefits package – what Dell calls Dell Rewards – reflects the competitive market where one lives and works. It supports Dell's pay-for-performance philosophy and culture of meritocracy.

A Winning Culture

Because Dell Philippines is determined to execute on its globally shared vision, employees continue to focus on infusing Dell's Winning Culture. Indeed, each team and individual has a passion for winning in everything they do. Among the defining characteristics of this culture are: Leader and Technician Empowerment, Personal Accountability, Meritocracy, Higher Standards of Ethics and Winning with Integrity, Direct Relationships, Employee Engagement, and Community Involvement Programs.

Without ever losing sight of its duty to care for all stakeholders, Dell Philippines has been involved in and supported communities through sponsorships, volunteering activities, fundraising events, advocacy campaigns, educational and youth development programs, and charity causes, among others. The company has forged partnerships with a number of NGOs, non-profit organizations, government units, educational institutions, private corporations and other foundations – all in order to provide new opportunities for people and help communities access, use and understand technology.

ChildHope Asia
Philippine National Red Cross
Kythe Foundation
Pangarap Shelter
U.S. Asean Business Council
GILAS (Gearing Up Internet Literacy and

Access for Students) Program
Pasay City Government

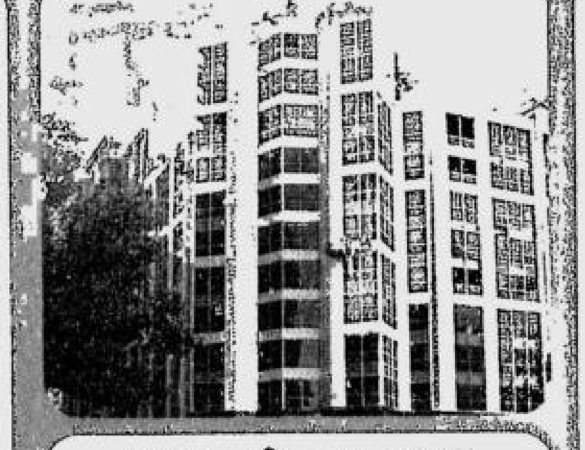
Because diversity is a business imperative at Dell, the company's community partnerships enhance its commitment to improving the quality of life around the world. ◎

WE'RE HIRING!

For those interested in a career at Dell, you may e-mail your resumes to recruitment_mnl@dell.com.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVES

- Graduates of Computer Science, Information Technology, Engineering or any related technical discipline preferred
- Should have prior experience in technical hardware support gained from a call center or other industries
- Possess excellent communication skills
- Prepared to work in a schedule of rotating shifts



DELL™
Consider the possibilities

Watch out for the opening of the DELL QUEZON CITY SITE at Eastwood City, Libis in January 2007.

REACHING OUT
A Dell employee lends a helping hand to young boy from ChildHope Asia.

Contact Information

The Dell Contact Center in Pasay City is located at 2/F North Parking Building, SM Mall of Asia Complex, while the site in Quezon City is at 2/F Eastwood Avenue Building, Eastwood City Cyberpark, Libis. For more information, visit www.dell.com/manila or call 728-DELL (3355). *For those interested in a career at Dell, you may e-mail your resumes to recruitment_mnl@dell.com.*

Hot money inflows hit $263M in Nov.

From January to November, net portfolio investments reached $2.11B

By Doris C. Dumlao

NET INFLOWS OF FOREIGN INVESTMENTS in local stocks, debt papers and other bank products hit $263.6 million in November—over four times better than the portfolio inflows of $60.9 million recorded a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The net inflows of portfolio investments, also known as "hot money" due to their volatile nature, marked a slowdown from the $451.8 million registered last month.

But the resulting eleven-month net inflows of $2.11 billion is marginally higher than the $2.08 billion inflows posted in the same period last year.

"Contributing to the sustained positive foreign investor sentiment were the upgrade in the outlook on the country's credit rating by Moody's Investors Service, the upgrade by both the International Monetary Fund and World Bank of their outlook on the country for 2006 and 2007, the further slowdown of the inflation rate to 5.4 percent in October, and robust third quarter corporate results of several blue chip companies," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said yesterday.

The national government's report that it had kept the budget deficit in October at only P5.8 billion—which brought the year-to-date deficit to P56.3 billion, or well below the P125 billion ceiling for 2006—as well as the strengthening of the peso, were also important factors that encouraged the portfolio inflows, Tetangco said.

Gross inflows of registered foreign portfolio investments in November amounted to $926.8 million, of which 66 percent were shares listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE). Government securities, mainly Fixed Rate Treasury Notes, or FXTNs, accounted for the balance of 34 percent.

These inflows more than offset November's capital outflows of $663.2 million out of the stock market ($206.2 million) and government securities ($192.3 million), aside from withdrawals of money market placements and peso deposits ($264.6 million).

From January to November 2006, gross foreign portfolio investments and capital outflows totaled $6.99 billion and $4.87 billion, respectively, for a net inflow of US$2.1 billion.

Gross investment inflows, which rose by 32 percent from the year-ago level, consisted mainly of PSE-listed shares of US$4.9 billion (70 percent of total), the bulk of which was spread among holding firms and companies in telecommunication, property and banking.

Investments in peso-denominated government securities, totaling $2.05 billion, accounted for 29 percent.

These portfolio investments were funded with fresh remittances of foreign exchange converted into pesos through banks operating in the Philippines, 80 percent of which originated from Singapore, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Foreign investments in both PSE-listed shares and government securities expanded by 35 percent and 26 percent, respectively, reflecting a further improvement in investor confidence, Tetangco said.

Also, gross capital outflows for the first 11 months of the year rose by 52 percent to $4.87 billion from the comparative 2005 level of $3.2 billion due mainly to divestments from listed shares of $1.71 billion (35 percent of total) and government securities of $1.95 billion (40 percent).

ERC grants RES licenses to Trans-Asia, Aboitiz unit

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has given Aboitiz Energy Solutions Inc. and Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. retail electricity supplier (RES) licenses, allowing the firms to secure supply contracts with the "contestable market" upon implementation of retail competition and open access.

According to the amended RES license guidelines signed Feb. 1, RES are entities that can sell, broker, market or aggregate electricity to end-users in the "contestable market" once retail competition and open access takes effect.

The "contestable market" refers to electricity end-users who are given the right to choose their own power suppliers, instead of being part of a captive market that distribution utilities serve under their franchises.

For a person or organization to qualify as a retail electricity supplier, financial and technical capabilities must be proven.

On the financial aspect, a license applicant should have one of the following to prove its financial capability to undertake the business: An investment-grade credit rating by a reputable credit bureau; unused cash resources equivalent to expected monthly billings, or at least P5 million; proof of creditworthiness as confirmed through certifications from firms that have extended credit terms to the applicant, including generation firms, the National Transmission Corp. and distribution utilities.

On the technical side, an applicant must be able to operate and manage an electricity supply business, which also involves proper understanding of the ERC's rules, codes and guidelines, and their applications to its business.

Having complied with these requirements, AESI and TA Oil secured their RES licenses last Wednesday, following GNPower, which received its license earlier this year.

AESI, formerly Aboitiz Power Solutions Inc., is a wholly owned subsidiary of Aboitiz Equity Ventures.

TA Oil, on the other hand, is a subsidiary of Philippine Investment Management Inc.

HER CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY
A woman tries on a pair of shoes at a shopping mall in Manila. Roughly 8.5 million Filipinos work abroad and the money they send and spend back home fuels consumption that, in turn, drives more than 70 percent of gross domestic product. REUTERS

Outspoken MBC stalwart bows out

By Daxim L. Lucas

LUZ

THE MAKATI BUSINESS CLUB (MBC) yesterday vowed to continue making its influential—and sometimes controversial—voice heard on national and business issues as a changing of the guard in the organization was unveiled yesterday.

At a press conference in Makati City, MBC chairman Ramon R. del Rosario Jr. announced that Guillermo M. Luz has retired as executive director of the group.

"We will always speak our mind on issues that concern the interest of the country," Del Rosario said, explaining that Luz's departure does not indicate a shift in MBC's policy. "We will always speak out on national issues."

Luz served for 24 years at the MBC, 19 of them as executive director. In this capacity, he also acted as spokesperson of MBC, which is the umbrella organization and lobby group of the country's largest corporations.

More importantly, the outspoken Luz also served as the de facto voice of "big business" in speaking out on controversial issues covering not only business but often also politics.

Luz joined the staff in 1981 as research associate, and later served as managing editor of MBC's economic newsletter. He was appointed executive director of the MBC in 1987.

His tenure at the MBC coincided with some of the most exciting periods in the country's recent history, from the end of martial law, through two People Power revolutions, and several economic boom and bust cycles.

During his watch, MBC's staff grew from only three people running monthly meetings and a single publication to today's professionally run secretariat of 25 people.

MBC has also involved itself in and developed a strong portfolio of corporate social responsibility projects, including Invest in Education, the Philippine Coffee Board, Habitat for Humanity, Children's Hour and GILAS.

Luz will continue his advocacy work as executive vice president of the Ayala Foundation.

MBC's new executive director is Alberto A. Lim, who has had a long and successful business career, most recently as president of Ten Knots Development Corp., according to a statement released yesterday.

Domestic airline cuts 80% off fares for 12th birthday

DOMESTIC CARRIER SOUTH East Asian Airlines (SEAir) is offering up to 80-percent discount on air fares to drum up interest in its 12th anniversary in March 2007.

SEAir has grown from a once-a-day flight operation, to a carrier servicing 18 local tourist destinations.

"SEAir is proud to have come this far," said Patrick Tan, vice president for commercial affairs. "And to celebrate our 11th birthday, we will slash fares from P2,070 to about P540."

The discounted fares do not cover regular surcharges and government tax.

It is our way of thanking those who avail of our services, and to show how bullish we are on local tourism," said Avelino L. Zapanta, recently appointed CEO.

The seat sale runs from Dec. 15 to Dec. 26. The travel period is from Jan. 1 to March 31, 2007.

The best way to avail of the promo is through SEAir's website, flyseair.com. Reservations may also be coursed through +632 849-0100.

The airline is flying high this year with the acquisition of its third Dornier 328, a 35-seater twin engine turboprop aircraft, that will ferry passengers from Manila to Caticlan.

SEAir also flies to Cebu City, Clark Airfield, Busuanga, Cuyo, El Nido, Puerto Princesa and Rodriguez in Palawan; San Jose in Occidental Mindoro; Siargao; Camiguin; Cotabato; Zamboanga; Jolo; and Tawi-Tawi.

"Aside from local operations, SEAir is positioning itself to enter the international market after its appointment as one of the official carriers for the BIMP-Eaga (Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia, Philippines East Asian Growth Area) region," Zapanta said. *Riza T. Olchondra*

Proposed law on fishing seen to sail smoothly

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A PROPOSED LAW THAT WILL allow Filipino tuna fishers access to international waters is expected to create a new sunshine industry if concerned governments and sectors in Southeast Asia team up for stronger marine resource management, according to a fisheries advocacy group.

The bicameral conference committee earlier this week approved the proposed Handling Fishing Law, which House aquaculture committee chair Rep. Luis Villafuerte said would further stimulate the highly lucrative tuna export industry.

Jaime Escobar Jr., information officer of the Tambuyog Development Center, said the consolidated bill would ease the stress on municipal waters, which currently produce a total of 30,000 metric tons of tuna a year.

With access to fishing grounds abroad, such as the Sulawesi Sea and the Pacific, "local fishers of yellow-fin tuna for example can get a bite of the 100,000 MT of yearly yield from those waters," Escobar said.

Over 30,000 small fishermen on motorized boats—mostly under 60 gross tons—use the handline method to snare high-value tuna.

Last year, the country shipped out 63,000 metric tons of large, high-grade tuna, mostly to the United States, Singapore, European Union, Japan and Canada.

"We may have another emergent export winner here, but that is if (the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and other neighboring countries) that harvest the Sulawesi and the Pacific work together on managing fish populations to make supplies sustainable," Escobar said.

Smart chief keeps voice in world GSM group

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINES WILL KEEP ITS voice in the board of the GSM Association (GSMA).

Napoleon Nazareno, Smart Communications Inc. president and CEO, is one of the original board members of GSMA. He will start his second two-year term in January 2007.

GSMA is a global trade association representing 700 GSM mobile phone operators across 215 countries. Its members serve more than two billion mobile subscribers, or 82 percent of the world's mobile phone users. GSMA also has partnerships with more than 180 manufacturers and suppliers.

Senior representatives from the world's top mobile phone operators are also among those on the 25-strong GSMA board.

"I am extremely pleased with the composition of the new board, which is well-placed to ensure that the association continues to make a major contribution to the development and growth of the mobile ecosystem to the benefit of both end-users and the industry itself," GSMA CEO and board member Rob Conway said in a statement.

Aside from Nazareno and Conway, others appointed were NTT DoCoMo's Takanori Utano, Bharti Sunil's Bharti Mittal, Cable & Wireless International's Harris Jones, Cingular's William W. Hague, China Mobile's Lu Xiangdong, China Unicom's Zhang Fan, GSMA EMC's (Telenor) Stein Hansen, Hutchison's Craig Ehrlich, KTF's Young-Chu Cho, Mobilkom Austria Group's Boris Nemsic, MTN Phuthuma's F Nhleko, Orascom's Naguib Sawiris, FR's Frank Esser, Singtel's Allen Lew, Softbank's Tetsuzo Matsumoto, Telecom Italia Mobile's Mauro Sentinelli, Telefonica's David Williams, Telenor's Arve Johansen, T-Mobile's Matthias Schroeter, Turkcell's Muzaffer Akpinar, Vimpelcom's Alexander Izosimov, and Vodafone's Alan Harper.

Bank lending up 11.1% ...

From page B3

activity to the community, social and personal services sector, which would include a wide variety of businesses such as hospitals, medical services providers, schools, hotels and restaurants and sanitation firms," Tetangco said.

Meanwhile, lending to the wholesale and retail trade industry continued to benefit from robust growth in consumer spending.

The increase in lending to these sectors, however, was partly offset by declines in lending to construction (7.5 percent); agriculture (4.5 percent), manufacturing (4.4 percent), and transportation, storage and communication (3.4 percent).

"Going forward, the anticipated growth of consumption and business activities toward the end of the year due to the holiday season is expected to underpin stronger credit demand," Tetangco said.

He noted that the BSP would continue to closely monitor developments on the credit front, aware that these have an important bearing on the outlook for inflation and economic growth.

"Close monitoring of credit developments, together with other economic variables, will help policymakers reach an informed decision on the appropriate stance of monetary policy," he said.

OFW remittances ...

From page B1

da, Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates, Singapore and Taiwan remained as the major sources of the remittances.

The inflows for the 10-month period were just $2 billion less than the amount of remittances that the BSP expects the banking system to capture for the whole of 2006.

Tetangco said local banks and non-banks were continuing to improve as conduits of remittances by enhancing transfer services, such as the use of the Internet and phone banking.

The banks have also broadened the types of services offered to include bills payment arrangements, established more remittance centers and tie-ups abroad and offered competitive service charges and conversion rates, he added.

OFW remittances have helped make the Philippine economy more resilient to shocks that could otherwise affect growth, inflation, external accounts and employment. In terms of employment, the ratio of jobless Filipinos could also double to 20 percent from the current 10 percent if all OFWs remained in the country instead.

Citing preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) on new hires and rehires, Tetangco said total deployment rose by 24.6 percent in October to 89,543.

The number of deployed land-based workers in October (at 66,029) was higher year-on-year by 33 percent while the number of deployed sea-based workers rose by 6 percent to 23,514.

On a cumulative basis, the total number of deployed Filipino workers for the 10-month period reached 962,025, or 12.7-percent higher than last year's level.

Classified by type of worker, the number of both land- and sea-based workers grew 12.1 percent and 14.8 percent to 726,732 and 235,293, respectively.

The main destinations were Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Taiwan, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Filipinos deployed overseas this year were mostly skilled and professional workers such as medical and healthcare personnel, food and hotel service staff, information technology personnel, engineers, performing artists and construction and manufacturing workers.

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- 4-storey commercial bldg. located in highly commercialized area in Poblacion, Santiago, Isabela, lotarea=531sq.m. floorarea=1,850sq.m. selling price @ P27.2M
- 3-storey residential building located @ Hillsborough, Alabang, Muntinlupa, lotarea= 419 sq.m. floorarea=453 sq.m. price@P14.2M
- 2-stry ofc warehouse bldg @ 9th St., between 9th and 10th Ave,Grace Park, Caloocan City LA=487.50sq.m. FA=820sq.m.sellingprice= @ P13.0M
- Highly Commercialized area/vacant lot near SM South Mall, along Alabang-Zapote Road LA=2,028 sq.m. ideal for food chain, commercial spaces selling price=@P45.0M
- 3strycondounit@MakatiPrimeCity@SanAntonio Village,Makati*FA=210.79sq.m.*sellingprice=P6.2M
- Highly commercialized vacant lot located near St. Joseph, Jollibee, Residenza Subd., Pag-Ibig City, lot area=4,341sq.m. @ P7,000 per sq.m.
- Ayala Alabang house& lot, floor area=350sq.m. lot area=558 sq.m. selling price@P14M

ALL PRICES ARE STILL NEGOTIABLE W/ EASY INSTALLMENT TERMS, LOW DOWN PAYMENT@20%

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
VERIZON COMMUNICATIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. 17/F Tower 2, The Enterprise Center 6766 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kenneth Frank Juarez	Network Operations Staff Consultant
H. DAYA INTERNATIONAL (PHIL.), INC. Visita Bldg., #146 Yakal St., Makati City	Ghanshyam Das Jagtiani	Vice President for Finance
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 5302 PBCom Tower Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Feng Ni	TSD Engineer
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 5302 PBCom Tower Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Wei Shi	Engineer
FLUOR DANIEL, INC. PHILIPPINES Asian Star Building, 2402-2404 Asean Drive, Filinvest Corp. City, Alabang Muntinlupa City	Gregory Robert Hurley	Project Operations Manager
GENTLE SUPREME PHILIPPINES, INC. Building 11, Panorama Compound, Veterans Center, Taguig City	Santi	IT Consultant
E.L. ENTERPRISES, INC. 18F Trafalgar Plaza 105 H.V. Dela Costa St. Salcedo Vill., Makati City	Eliyahu Levin	Chairman of the Board and President
HAN KUK PHINIX ENTERPRISES INC. Unit 21F Marina Residential Suites Del Pilar St. cor. Pedro Gil, Malate, Manila	Jaeho Choi	President
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 5302 PBCom Tower Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Yuwang Lu	Turnkey Network Planning and Design Engineer
FONETECH INTERNATIONAL INC. JMBC Building, Zansibar cor. Rockefeller St., San Isidro, Makati City	Yen Ping Lin	Sales & Marketing/ Brand Director
HUAWEI TECHNOLOGIES PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 5302 PBCom Tower Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Guodong Huang	TSD Engineer
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING & INNOVATION CONSULTING INC. 10/F IBM Plaza Bldg., Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Stefan Luksch	Corporate Business Trainer
GLOBAL STEEL PHILIPPINES (SPV-AMC), INC. Unit 2307 27F 88 Corp. Center Sedeño cor. Valero Sts., Salcedo Vill., Makati City	Bikash Kumar Agrawal	Business Analyst
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Zhijian Ling	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Xiangwen Liu	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Wijaya Tio Atma	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Yongfeng Liu	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Shengming Xia	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	William Chen	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kean Wah Ee	IT Support Staff
SILVER GOOSE 8 INTERNATIONAL, INC. Basement Exportbank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Pasong Tamo, Makati City	Rudy Heryanto Wibowo	Data Entry Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Hufei Yan	IT Support Staff
SILVER GOOSE 8 INTERNATIONAL, INC. Basement Exportbank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Pasong Tamo, Makati City	Eldi Marantika Putra	Data Entry Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Jianxin Pan	IT Support Staff
SILVER GOOSE 8 INTERNATIONAL, INC. Basement Exportbank Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Pasong Tamo, Makati City	Cho Peng Fei	Master Trainer

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Dec. 16, 2006)

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Unit 8 Bohol Mansion, # 43 Sgt Esquerra St., Quezon City
Phone: 413.66.25 / able.ad.agency@gmail.com
Or submit to security guard of Port Royal Building, Rada St., Makati City

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Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,
Petitioner,
- versus -
NELIA YEE and M & R
TIMES BAKESHOP,
Respondents,
x-----------------------------------x

SSC CASE NO. 12-16207-05

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION

To: NELIA YEE and M & R
TIMES BAKESHOP

GREETINGS:

Notice is hereby given that on the **26th day of October, 2006**, a RESOLUTION, consisting of 4 pages, was promulgated in the above-mentioned case, the dispositive portion of which reads as follows:

"WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, the final and executory Resolution dated October 9, 1996 in SSC Case No. 12910 entitled, *"PABLO SALIMBOT, Petitioner, vs. NELIA YEE and M and R TIMES BAKESHOP, Respondents, SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, Intervenor"*, is hereby revived.

Accordingly, upon finality of this resolution, let a Writ of Execution be *moto proprio* issued to the Clerk of Court of the Regional Trial Court of Bacolod City, in his capacity as Ex-Officio Sheriff, commanding him to levy upon and sell any real and/or personal property or properties, not exempt from execution, of respondent Nelia Yee/M & R Times Bakeshop, located at Gonzaga St., Bacolod City, or wherever said property or properties may be found, and to garnish the deposits of the said respondent in any and all banks where she maintains accounts sufficient to satisfy the balance of her adjudged liabilities to the SSS, as follows:

Unpaid damages under Section 24 (a) of the SS Law, as amended	-	P28,000.00
Unpaid 3% penalty	-	19.08
Total	-	P28,019.08

Corollary herewith, the Head of the SSS Bacolod City Hub Branch is directed to closely coordinate with the Court's Sheriff tasked to implement the Writ to ensure its proper enforcement and the prompt payment of the proceeds of execution to the SSS.

SO ORDERED."

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

(PDI - Dec. 16, 2006)

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
P.O. Box 789, 0980 Manila, Philippines
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, 0401 Philippines
Tel. 632 4231, 632 4306, 632 4444; Fax No. 636 2577
Email: psantiago@adb.org, cjpanganiban@adb.org or cpsoriano@adb.org

INVITATION for PREQUALIFICATION to BID

PROVISION for IN-HOUSE MEDICAL and/or DENTAL SERVICES
(Contract No. ADB/OAS-2006/065)

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, invites interested companies to apply for prequalification to bid for the provision for in-house medical and/or dental services. The Contractor, under the supervision of ADB's Medical Doctor, shall provide the following services: (a) operation and maintenance of a medical and/or dental clinic (ADB Medical Center) inside ADB's Headquarters Building, (b) provision of all medical and/or dental requirements of ADB staff, and (c) promotion of health awareness through seminars, workshops, or lectures to be held once a month with prior approval of ADB's Medical Doctor.
2. The application for prequalification may be made for the provision of medical services only, dental services only, or both medical and dental services.
3. Prequalification documents may be obtained from the office of the Head, Procurement & Contracting Unit, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Room 1630S at the above address, from 15 to 22 December 2006 on any working day (from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.).
4. Last day for submission of application for prequalification is 10:00 a.m., 12 January 2007.
5. Only prequalified bidders shall be invited to participate in the bidding exercise to be conducted by ADB. Bid documents will be issued to prequalified bidders from 12 to 16 February 2007.
6. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation of prequalification documents shall be borne solely by the applicant. ADB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications for prequalification without incurring any liability or any obligation to inform the affected applicant/s of the grounds for ADB's action.

(Sgd.) CÉCILE L.H.F. GREGORY
Chairperson
Institutional Procurement Committee
Office of Administrative Services

Asian Development Bank ADB
FIGHTING POVERTY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

(PDI – December 15 & 16, 2006)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Municipality of San Manuel, Pangasinan, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project/goods:

Title : Rehab./Raising to Grade/Concrete Pavement of Barangay Flores, Guiset Sur, Cabacaraan Farm to Market Road
Approved Budget : P5,000,000.00
Source of Fund : PMS
Title : Rehab./Raising to Grade/Concrete Pavement/Stone Masonry of Barangay Narra, Flores Farm to Market Road.
Approved Budget : P10,000,000.00
Source of Fund : PMS

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment owned, leased or under purchase available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipments requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of LOI including Appreciation for Eligibility	December 13, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	December 15, 2006
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	December 18, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility	December 20, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 22, 2006
6. Pre-Bid Conference	December 26 2006
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	December 28, 2006

The Municipality of San Manuel, Pangasinan assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ETHYLENE M. ASUNCION
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 16 & 17, 2006)

TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the supply and delivery of material requirements needed for the upgrading of metering of large load consumers and for the installation of distribution transformer intended for sole users, stated below are hereby invited to pre-qualify with Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TARELCO II). Only pre-qualified applicants shall be invited to participate in the bidding.

A. BIDDING OF DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER

	Item	Quantity
1.	Transformer, Distribution, 1 – Ph, 25 KVA, 7620/13200 V GYPW, 120/240V SW, Oil Immersed, Self Cooled, 60 Hz, Conventional, Double Bushing, Brand New, PCB Free, Preferred Brands: Philec, Wagner, Cooper, Hanyang with Standard Losses Requirement shown below.	9 units
2.	Same as Item No. 1 except 15 KVA, 240 V SW	4 units
3.	Same as Item No. 1 except 37.5 KVA, 240 V SW	6 units
4.	Same as Item No. 1 except 50 KVA, 240 V SW	6 units
5.	Same as Item No. 1 except 75 KVA, 240 V SW	9 units

Standard Loss Requirements:

	Core Loss, Watts	Copper Loss, Watts
15 KVA	76	179
25 KVA	108	294
37.5 KVA	153	392
50 KVA	167	506
75 KVA	274	663

B. BIDDING OF ELECTRONIC METER

	Item	Quantity
1.	GE kV2 C B-directional Electronic KWHR Meter, Fm 48A, Polyphase, "FITZALL" type, Cl-20, 120-480 Volts (10-20%) Wide Range Voltage, Bottom Connected, 3-Ph, 3 or 4 Wire Wye or Delta, 50/60 Hz with site Genie Automatic Site Monitoring System, TOU Battery, Lexan Cover with Optocom Port and Standard Demand Reset, with Reactive Capability, Tested, Calibrated and Sealed by ERC (Supported with ERC Test Certificate), with Technical Support.	20 units
2.	GE kV2 C B-directional Electronic KWHR Meter, Form 16S Cl-200, 3-Ph, 120-480 V, TA 30, Kh 21.6, CA – 0.2, 50/60 Hz Calibrated and Sealed by ERC (Supported with ERC Test Certificate), with technical support	15 units
3.	GE kV2 C B-directional Electronic KWHR Meter, Form 3S, Cl-20, 1-Ph, 240 V with socket base, Tested, Calibrated and Sealed by ERC (Supported With ERC Test Certificate) with technical support	15 units
4	Soft Switch, Load Profile, R	15 units

NOTE : Manufacturer's / Suppliers are required to submit the following documents to qualify:

a. Manufacturer's affidavit authorizing a named representative to offer its product.
b. Manufacturer's Product Warranty and After Sales Certificates
c. Importation documents with proof of payment of taxes and duties
d. Quality Test report / certificate

Prequalification documents shall be received from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM by the Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee through its Chairman, MS. MARILOU N. VERGARA, at TARELCO II Main Office Building located in San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac, Philippines.

Submission of Prequalification Documents – **December 19-27, 2006**
Bid Documents are available beginning – **December 28-January 03, 2007**
Date and Time of Pre-bid Conference – **January 04, 2007 at 1:30 PM**
Date and Time of Bidding shall be announced during the Pre-bid Conference.

Accredited suppliers previously pre-qualified need only to update their files with TARELCO II.

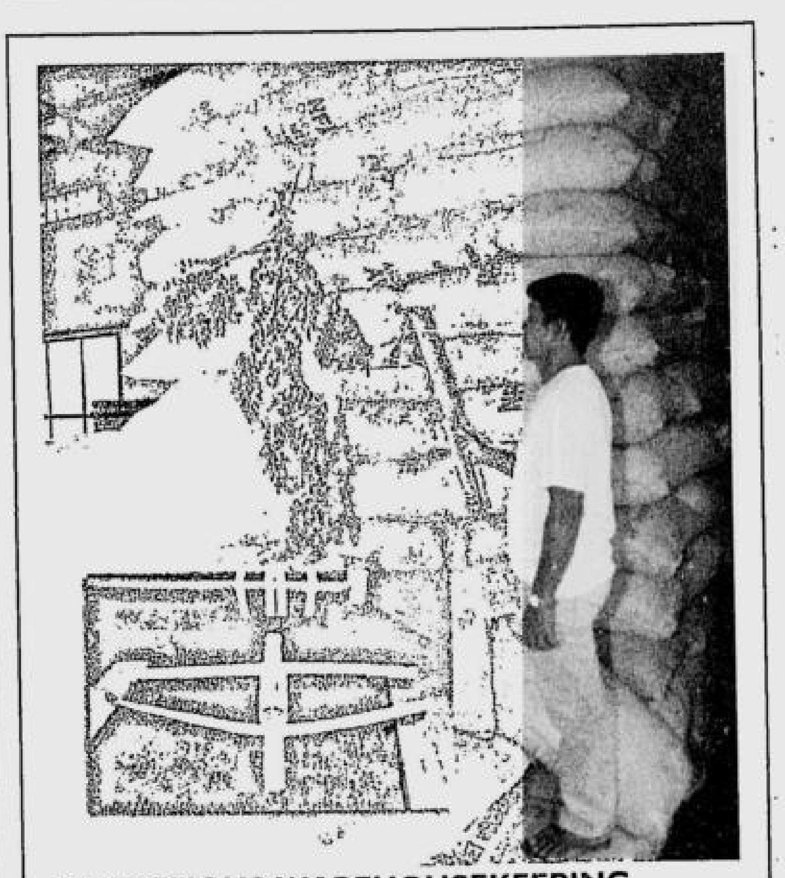
A Bid Bond of at least 2.5% of Total Bid Price is required, either in form of Cash, Manager's or Cashier's Check of Surety Bond.

TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all applications to pre-qualify and to bid without offering any reason, and waive any defect therein. TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. Send all communications to the PBAC Secretariat at the address mentioned above or at Telephone No. (045) 923-0460 or Fax No. (045) 923-0471 & 609-0224.

(Sgd.) MARILOU N. VERGARA
PBAC Chairman

(PDI–Dec. 16 & 19, 2006)



INDIGENOUS WAREHOUSEKEEPING PRACTICES

A laborer at a National Food Authority warehouse in San Dionisio, Iloilo shakes a bamboo clapper, an indigenous material used to scare away birds from stored grains. The NFA closely monitors the maintenance of its rice and palay stocks and utilizes indigenous warehousekeeping practices including the use of madre de cacao leaves as insect repellant and the bamboo rat trap (inset). Aside from actual physical loss, rats, birds and insect droppings can cause considerable reduction in grains' quality through infestation and contamination, if left unchecked. The NFA to date maintains a total of 11.2 million bags of rice for food security stocks in its 342 warehouses nationwide.

(2) SR. PROJECT ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER, LICENSED
MALE 10 YRS. EXPERIENCE
(2) JR. PROJECT ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER, LICENSED
MALE 5 YRS. EXPERIENCE
FOREMAN
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PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen. Person must pray this 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this soon as your favor has been granted. – JPL

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ERRATA

In the **NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S** of the **DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE-NCR)**, the names of the following foreign nationals were inadvertently printed:

Mazen Rizk of MANPOWER OUTSOURCING SERVICES, INC. (published: Nov. 30)

Mohammadreza Ahmadi of MARIGOLD PHARMA CORP. (published: Dec. 1)

Audrey Poh Geok Kam of AIRGLOBE, INC. (published: Dec. 6)

Our apologies.

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol Malaybalay City
Tel. # 088-221-4820 & Telefax # 088-221-2537
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder projects:

Name of Projects:
Project I · Reference # 300-06-36 – Supply, Delivery & Installation of Medical Equipment
Project II · Reference # 300-07-01 – Supply, Delivery & Installation of Medical Equipment
Project III · Reference # 300-06-37 – Supply, Delivery & Installation of Computer Hardware
Project IV · Reference # 300-07-02 – Supply, Delivery & Complete Installation of 1 unit Generator Set
Project V · Reference # 300-07-03 – Contract for Security Services

Description and Location of the Project:
Project I · Made in Germany, USA, Japan & Korea only for the use of BPH-Malaybalay, BPH-Maramag & BPH-Manolo Fortich
Project II · Made in Germany, USA, Japan and Korea only for the BPH-Maramag, North Poblacion, Maramag, Bukidnon
Project III · Computer Hardware Requirements for the Bukidnon Provincial Health System for all Bukidnon Provincial Hospitals except in Manolo Fortich, & 14PHS & PEEDMO
Project IV · Unit must be in USA or approved equal from Europe (156KVA, 230 Volts, Phase Three (3) and 60 Hertz for BPH-Maramag
Project V · To secure Government properties within the Province of Bukidnon

Approved Budget for the Contract:
Project I · Thirty One Million Seventy Six Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Four Pesos (P 31,076,774.00)
Project II · Thirty Eight Million Forty Eight Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Six Pesos (P 38,048,666.00)
Project III · Eight Million Three Hundred Forty Eight Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Nine Pesos (P 8,348,489.00)
Project IV · One Million Seven Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Pesos (P 1,726,450.00)
Project V · Two Million Six Hundred Ninety Five Thousand Pesos (P2,695,000.00)

Project Completion/Duration:
Project I · Sixty (60) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Project II · Sixty (60) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Project III · Twenty (20) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Project IV · Sixty (60) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Project V · February to June 2007

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bidding Conference Performance Security, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule	Venue
1. Advertisement	December 15-26, 2006	Newspaper of Nationwide Circulation, Provincial Website, GEPS, Vicinity of PGSO, PGO, PTO & BAC Office
2. Pre-bidding Conference	December 22, 2006	PGSO, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
3. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 18-29, 2006	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
4. Opening of Bids Deadline for Submission of Bids	January 3, 2007 Not later than 9:00 a.m.	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
5. Bid Evaluation	January 5, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
6. Post Qualification	January 8, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
7. Notice of Award	January 10, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable Bid documents fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) / project for project nos. I and II, Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) for project No. III, One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for project No. IV and Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) for project no. V.

For inquiry, Please call Telephone Nos. 088-221-2537 and 088-221-4820.

The *Provincial Government of Bukidnon* assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved:
(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
BAC Chairman

(PDI – December 16 & 23, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL FOR NEGOTIATED SALE

The Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) is inviting interested parties to submit proposals and letters of intent to negotiate for the disposition of the property described below thru outright sale, joint venture, lease, or other similar or variant schemes:

LOCATION of the PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION	No. of Lots	Area (in sqm.)
IMPERIAL SOUTH MEADOWS SUBDIVISION Brgy. San Vicente, Sto. Tomas, Batangas	Saleable Lots:		
	• With Improvements :	195	
	• Vacant :	769	
		964	62,747
	Rawland	12	52,819
	Total	976	115,566

1. The disposition and sale of the property shall be on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis and may involve the entire property or only a portion of it;
2. For outright sale proposals, terms of payment may be in cash or installment;
3. Offers for joint venture should indicate the proposed terms, sharing scheme, duration of the project and schedule of projected sales;
4. Offers for lease must indicate the proposed terms of lease including a provision for escalation of lease rates; and
5. For other similar or variant schemes, the proposed terms of sale must be indicated.

HGC reserves the right to require additional information as it deems necessary to better understand and evaluate the offer(s).

Activities	Date/Time
Submission of Letters of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	December 11, 2006 to January 3, 2007
Pre-negotiation Conference	January 3, 2006 / 2:00 pm
Submission of Eligibility Requirements & Financial Proposal/Offer	December 12, 2006 to January 5, 2007 / 5:00 pm

Interested parties are encouraged to inspect the property before tendering their offers.

Details pertaining to the property as well as the guidelines for the negotiation can be obtained from the HGC's Project Management and Acquired Assets Disposition Group (PMAADG) office located at the 4th Floor of Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City from December 11, 2006 until January 3, 2007 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

The Financial proposal/offer shall be sealed and dropped at the designated box located at the HGC's PMAADG office.

For inquiries, please call Ruth E. Bañares or Luisa E. Cabrera at telephone nos. 897-32-86 & 897-32-90 or visit the HGC office at #335 Jade Building, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS, TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR TO ACCEPT SUCH OFFER AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(Sgd.) **DANILO C. JAVIER**
Chairman
Asset Disposition Committee

(PDI–Dec. 10 & 16, 2006)

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accepts **1992-2007**
model
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Growing figures of drug dependents, alcoholics and those with behavioral problem are victimizing the new generation, as young as seven years old. These diseases last for years. On top of it time, energy and often financial resources should be considered, which is physically exhausting and mentally draining. Caring for those with these problems is not easy.

To help meet that need, one Algon Place Foundation Center in Cabuyao, Laguna aims to make a difference. The facility is complete and conducive; it employs a unique holistic modality combining concepts based mainly on the spiritual tenets of 12Steps fellowships, Therapeutic Community (TC) and multi disciplinary team approach. The structured program is comprehensive and filled with daily activities focusing on value formation, behavioral change and spiritual growth. The center can also act as facilitator for the family's tie. Most importantly the professional staff makes sure that the tailor made treatment plans of the residents are being met.

The center provides psychological, social, medical and spiritual services that make One Algon Place distinctively different. It advocates compassionate love, touching other people's lives and a meaningful existence. This is the epistemology of the institution.

The center also offers an extensive array of services that includes Self-direction Renewal Program, seminars, trainings and facilities. TOAPFI is accredited and licensed by the Department of Health.

The One Algon Place Foundation, Inc has existed for two years now and serving clients from across the Philippines. TOAPFI celebrated its 2nd year anniversary last September 17, 2006.

Please feel free to call (632) 68006121 or 20 or e-mail celgonzales@onealgonplace.com.ph for more information.

OBITUARIES

DEATH NOTICE

LT. COL. FELIZARDO V. SEBASTIAN

His body lies in state at the family residence at #197 Pasolo Street, Valenzuela City.

Interment will be on December 17, 2006 after the 3:00 pm Mass at Polo Catholic Cemetery, Valenzuela City.

we design OBITUARIES for free

You are gone...
But for us you never left...
GOD has you in His keeping
We have you in our hearts

OUR LOVING MOTHER

Antoñita S. Gotico vda. de Cipriaso

(Ma. Antonia)

died peacefully in the grace of the Lord on December 13, 2006 at the age of 93.

Her bereaved children **Adoracion** & **Leonides**, **Ben** & **Dey**, **Rose** & **Boy** & **Ceferino** (†); grandchildren **John**, **Denise** & **Sean**, **Toni**, **Vic** & **Connie**, **Ricky** & **Owen** & **Christina**; great grandchildren **Marc** & **Matt**, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at #88 Kaingen, Kawit, Cavite.

Interment will be on Saturday, December 23, 2006 at Wakas Cemetery, Kawit, Cavite after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at St. Mary Magdalene, Kawit, Cavite.

TRINIDAD SABAS FLORES

of UP Diliman and Batac, Ilocos Norte

Peacefully joined our Creator and her husband ***Augusto*** *on December 13, 2006 at the age of 78.*

Her children **Clare & Jess San Mateo, Susan & Jeannie Edilo**, and **Maritess & Bill Paelmo**; grandchildren **Joseph San Mateo, Isa Edilo** and **Gio Paelmo**; sisters and brothers **Rufina Sabas, Manuel & Angeles Sabas, Ben & Chin-Mei Sabas**, and **Sol & Fred Asuncion**; relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Our Lady of Consolation Parish, 81 Alondras St., Mira-Nila Homes, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 17, 2006 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park immediately following the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the OLCP.

PELAGIA DION VDA. de DELO

Peacefully passed away at the age of 96.

She is survived by her children: **Esmenino** and **Fe**, **Adelino** and **Catalina**, **Maximo** and **Dory**, **Gaudencio** (†) and **Helen**, **Nolasco** and **Adela** (†), **Lydia** and **Efren** and **Juanita**, grandchildren, relatives and friends from the Filipino community of Naples, Italy and the Divine Mercy Apostolate of Naples, Italy.

Her body lies in state at their residence in Roxas St., Cuyapo, N.E.

Interment will be on Monday, December 18, 2006 at 10:00 A.M.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Message of Thanks

We the family and relatives of the late

CHRIS R. GABRIEL

wish to thank our friends, colleagues, the community of ST. JAMES the GREAT PARISH and Johnson & Johnson (PHILS.) who offered masses, prayers, sent flowers, spent precious time with us, and expressed in many ways your overwhelming love, concern and support in our hour of grief.

"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in Me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me, will never die."

John 11:25-26

LEODEGARIO SYBICO AMATONG

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord on December 13, 2006 at the age of 78.

His bereaved family: wife, **AURORA**; children **LILIBET**, **AMY & TODD**, **ARMAND & JOJI**, and **LEILA**; grandchildren: **ETHAN LORENZ**, **EVAN JOSEPH**, **EGAN JOHN**, **KIMBERLY ANN**, **MICHAEL VINCENT**, and **AMANDA ISABELA**; brothers, sister, in-laws, nephews, and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., Quezon City, from December 13-15 and will be flown to Dipolog City on December 16, 2006 via Philippine Airlines.

Interment will be on Saturday, the 23rd of December 2006 in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte.

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LEGRAND
at Eastwood City

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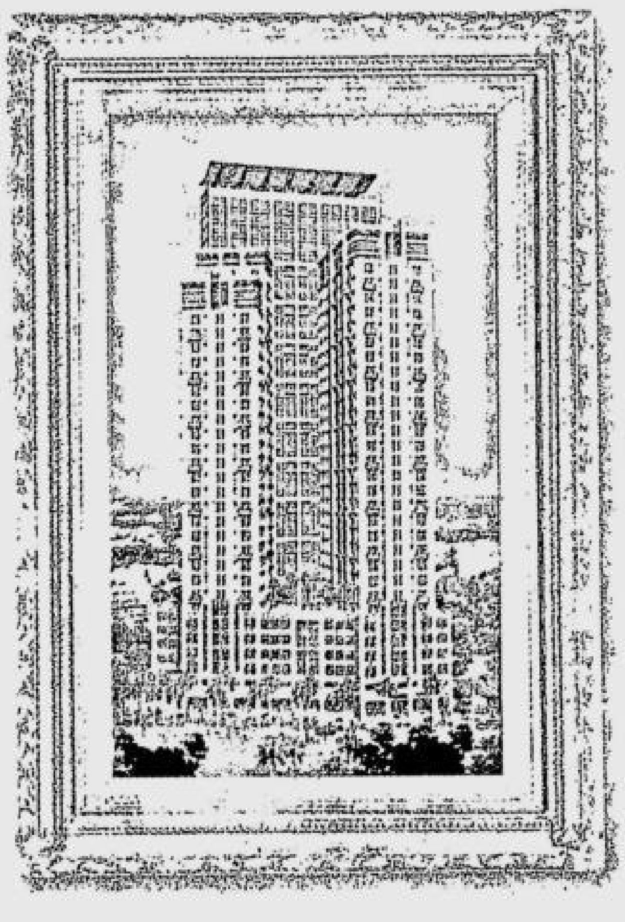

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PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

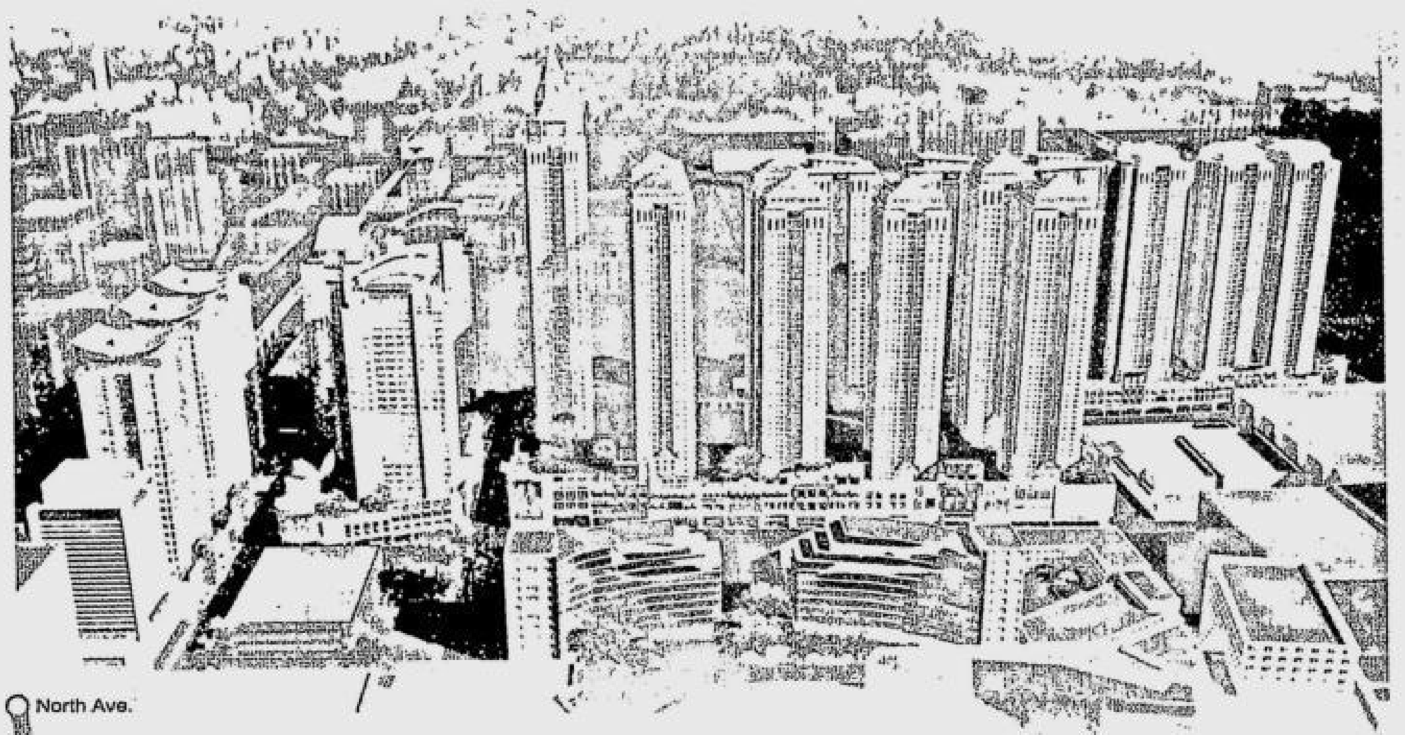
MANHATTAN Garden City is composed of 20 residential towers or 8,000 condominium units located in the northeastern side (opposite the Edsa side) of the Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City

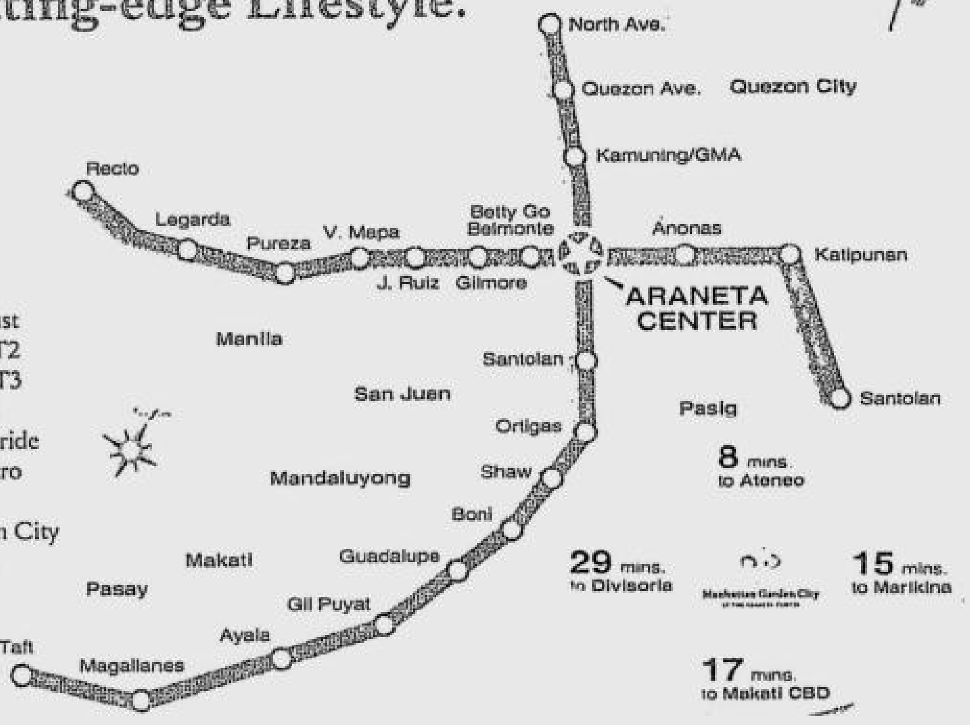
Unique home loan package set to excite industry

STORY ON PAGE B2-2

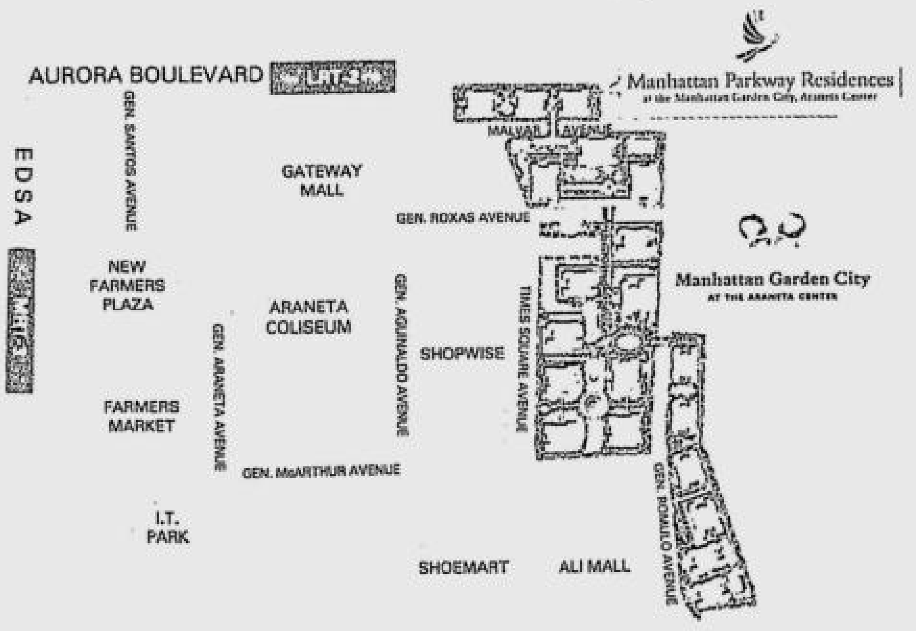
Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER

Connecting You to the Metro's Most Important Destinations. *And* to a Cutting-edge Lifestyle.





North Ave.
Quezon Ave.
Quezon City
Kamuning/GMA
Recto
Legarda
Pureza
V. Mapa
Betty Go Belmonte
J. Ruiz
Gilmore
Anonas
Katipunan
ARANETA CENTER
Manila
Santolan
San Juan
Ortigas
Pasig
Santolan
8 mins. to Ateneo
Mandaluyong
Shaw
Boni
Makati
Guadalupe
29 mins. to Divisoria
Manhattan Garden City
15 mins. to Marikina
Pasay
Gil Puyat
Ayala
Taft
Magallanes
17 mins. to Makati CBD



AURORA BOULEVARD
LRT-2
Manhattan Parkway Residences
at the Manhattan Garden City, Araneta Center
MALVAR AVENUE
EDSA
MRT-3
GEN. SANTOS AVENUE
GATEWAY MALL
GEN. ROXAS AVENUE
Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER
NEW FARMERS PLAZA
ARANETA COLISEUM
SHOPWISE
TIMES SQUARE AVENUE
GEN. AGUINALDO AVENUE
FARMERS MARKET
GEN. ARANETA AVENUE
GEN. McARTHUR AVENUE
I.T. PARK
SHOEMART
ALI MALL
GEN. ROMULO AVENUE

The Manhattan Garden City is the country's first transit-oriented development, linking you to not just one but two train systems: the LRT2 along Aurora Boulevard. And MRT3 along EDSA. So you're just a stroll away from a quick and traffic-free ride to virtually all major points of Metro Manila.

What's more, Manhattan Garden City connects you to the shops, offices, restaurants and entertainment centers at the Araneta Center. So you can live, shop, play and move like never before.

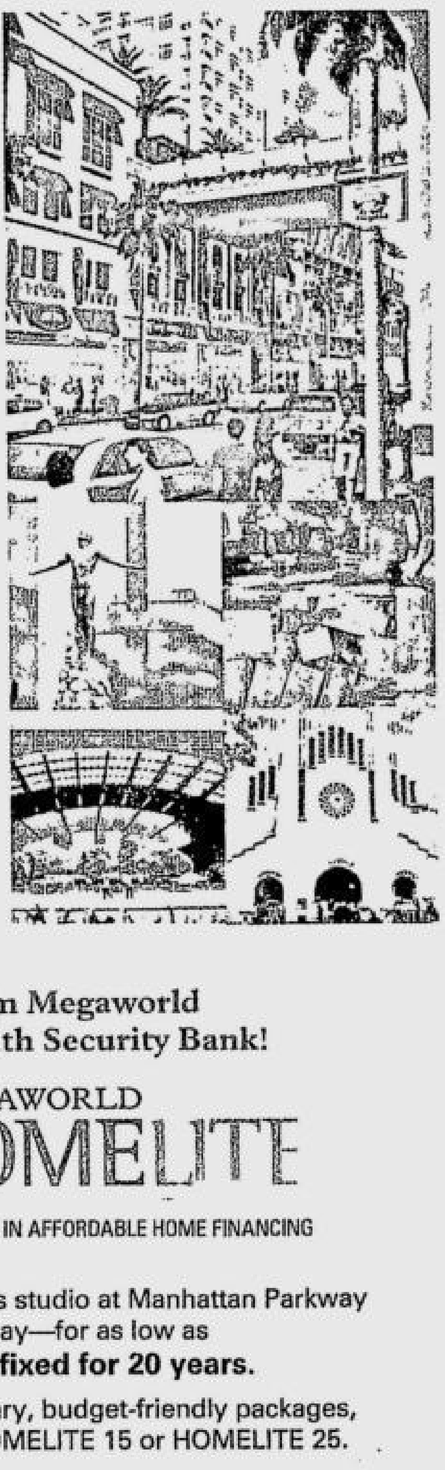
Easy ride around the metro.

A 729-meter-long footbridge standing four stories above the streets interconnects all 20 residential towers of your community. And leads you straight to the LRT2 and MRT3. There are lush greenery and benches. So going to the train stations is as enjoyable as a walk in the park.

With the trains close by, the power to go places is yours. Your children can be in Ateneo or UP in Quezon City in just 8 minutes via the LRT2. Or Manila's university belt in 19 minutes.

Your wife can get to Divisoria's bargain stores in 29 minutes. While you can be in your office in Ortigas in 6 minutes, Ayala Avenue in 17 minutes or Taft Avenue in 22 minutes through the MRT3. And since both lines link up with the LRT1, you can reach many more places in the metro than ever before.

This means you spend *less* time on the road. And *more* fun time with family and friends.



Easy link to the Araneta Center.

Manhattan Garden City enjoys direct access to the giant playground that's the Araneta Center. Your entry point is a **four-level transfer station** with a hotel-style lobby, grand staircase and four passenger elevators. The station connects you at the third level to the Gateway Mall and its Oasis floating garden. From there, you're just steps away from Rustan's, SM, Shopwise, Ali Mall, Farmers Plaza and the iconic Araneta Coliseum.

Manhattan Parkway: Paradise in the Sky

Manhattan Parkway Residences
at the Manhattan Garden City, Araneta Center

Manhattan Garden City welcomes you to its first phase: Manhattan Parkway. Take your pick of cozy executive studios and relaxing one-bedroom suites housed in three towers. With sweeping views of the Araneta Center and Manila Bay. At the fourth-story garden deck, enjoy the trellised walkways, jogging trails, fitness station, indoor sauna/spa and gym. And you're just a footbridge away from more play amenities—and more fun—at the upcoming phases.

A FIRST from Megaworld in cooperation with Security Bank!

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For Announcement Purposes Only

Unique home loan package set to excite industry

By Charles E. Buban

WHILE PROPERTY DEVELOPER Megaworld Corp. is changing the Metro Manila landscape through a series of large-scale residential and office developments including urban centers integrating office, residential and commercial components, the company is also breaking new grounds in other areas. This time it is offering a unique home loan package that is set to excite the industry.

Even with relatively low interest rates already prevailing in the industry today, Megaworld was able to forge a tie-up with Security Bank, enabling the developer to come up with an even more attractive home loan package.

Called Homelite, this home financing facility will initially be offered to home buyers of Megaworld's latest project, the Manhattan Garden City.

10 packages

Homelite comes in a choice of up to 10 budget-friendly packages (see table) that include the Super Mega Light, which charges a low 5.50 percent interest a year, fixed for five years and with no down payment; Mega Light 10, which charges 8.5 percent interest a year, fixed for 10 years and at 10 percent down payment; and Mega Stretch 25, which charges 11 percent interest a year, fixed for 25 years and at 20 percent down payment.

While the Super Mega Light package would be ideal for investors who have a strong cash flow and who want to save years of paying interest, the Mega Stretch 25 package on the other hand, could afford one a 22.5-square-meter studio unit that comes out at a very affordable P10,847 monthly payment.

"This is the best chance for any investor and home buyer to own a house at a price they can afford and at a scheme that would shield them from any inflationary pressures. The combination of low interest rates (much lower than what is available in the market, today), low monthly amortization and inherent low risk of Megaworld as a property developer (due to its excellent track record) will definitely make Homelite enough reason to excite the industry," said Megaworld Central Properties president Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

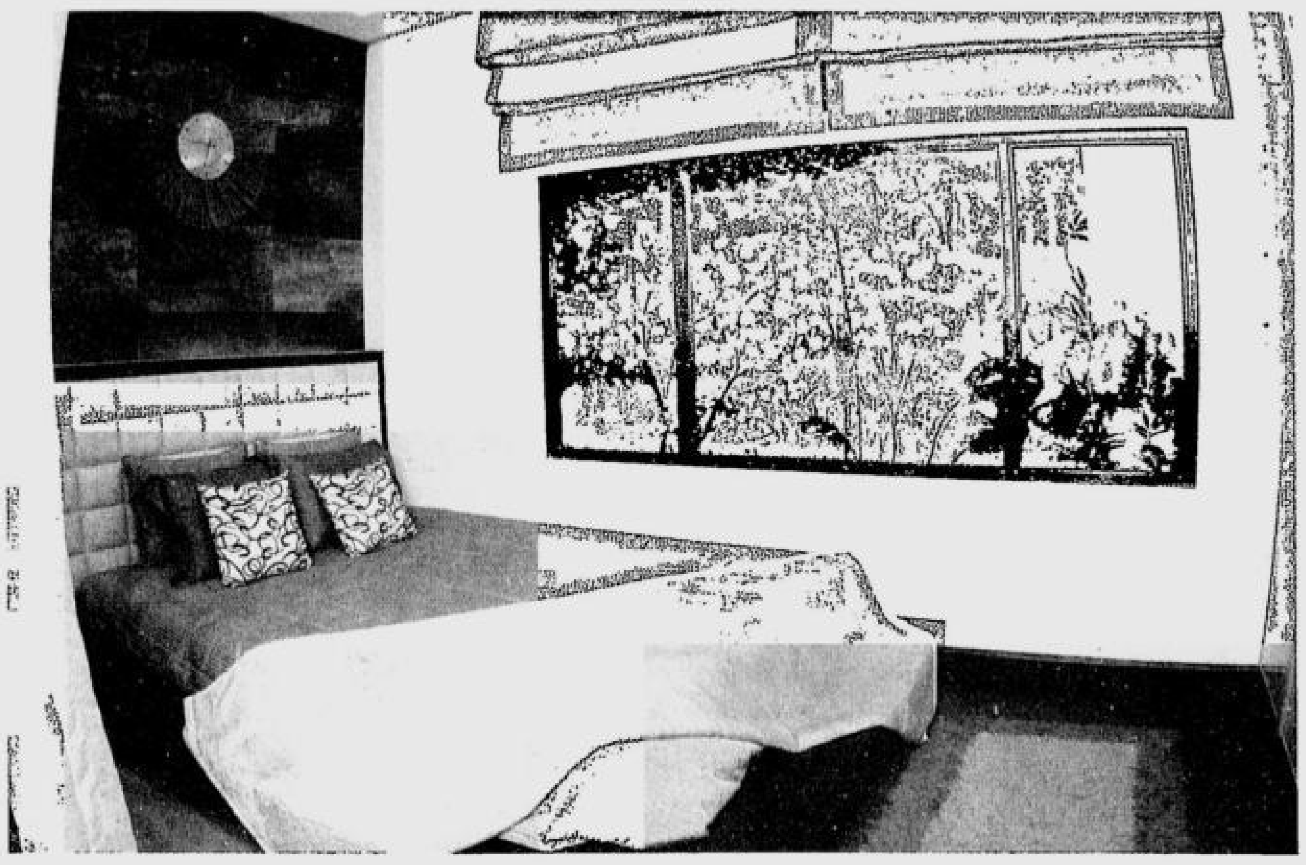
Yu believes Megaworld's impressive track record has impressed Security Bank to agree on such a tie up providing a P7-billion funding for Homelite.

Perfect complement

Yu added that the Manhattan Garden City makes a perfect complement for Homelite.

"Security Bank noted that this new development project of Megaworld would allow investors and home buyers who value strategic location (Manhattan Garden City lies in the intersection of two mass transit systems—the Metro Rail Transit and the Light Rail Transit 2), the luxurious feel of condominium living that mimics those found in New York and Singapore, to enjoy a financing scheme that will allow them not to worry about the external economic and political conditions in the country and the region," he explained.

Manhattan Garden City (www.themanhattangardencity.com) is composed of 20 residential towers or 8,000 condominium units located in the northeastern side (opposite the Edsa side) of the Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City.



CHOOSING a 25-year payment plan and with fixed interest rate of 11 percent, an investor or a home buyer could avail himself/herself of a luxurious studio unit costing a little more than P10,000 a month.

A garden-inspired community, the Manhattan Garden City is a joint venture with the Araneta Group.

The P20-billion project will be completed in 12 to 14 years with the first phase, composed of three buildings, starting early next year.

Warm reception

Indeed, Yu reported and appreciated the warm reception they got as well as the surge in reservation payments with the announcement of Homelite.

"The company is proud to help fulfill their dreams of owning a home that they can be proud of. This will further challenge the company to design more projects and payments schemes that will suit their requirement," he said.

Yu considers the Homelite the most phenomenal development in recent years in so far as home financing is concerned.

"The tie up between a developer and a bank and the resulting home loan package has never happened in the history of the Philippine housing industry. Homelite is breaking new grounds and this is certainly one of the most exciting and trendsetting innovations Megaworld has developed through the years," he said.

Megaworld Corp. is a high-end property developer which, over time, has evolved into a full-range real estate developer and has also ventured in hotel, leisure and resort development and management as well as into IT and the gaming business.

In the last 17 years, the company has launched more than 200 residential, commercial and office buildings including Eastwood City in Quezon City, Paseo Parkview Towers in Makati City and Manila Square and LandBank Plaza in Manila.

MEGA FINANCING	Terms of Payment (Years to Pay)	Number of Years Interest are Fixed	Down Payment	Interest Rate (applied on Balance)
Super Mega Light	5	5	No DP	5.50%
	5	5	10%	5.75%
Mega Light	10	10	10%	8.50%
	15	15	10%	9.75%
	20	5	20%	9.00%
	20	10	20%	9.50%
Mega Stretch	20	20	20%	10.50%
	25	5	20%	9.25%
	25	10	20%	9.75%
	25	25	20%	11.00%

HOMELITE offers fixed interest rates for different payment scheme and is touted to be the first and only program to offer smooth end-to-end financing starting even from the pre-selling stage.

Living architecture a gift

Living Architecture

Marcos de Guzman Jr.

LIVING ARCHITECTURE IS NOT just the title of this column. For me, it is a point of view, a constant choice, and a way of life. Living architecture is a gift.

To view life as an architect means you stand from a perspective of creativity, seeing the beauty of the world around you unfold from the most grandiose mountaintop panorama to the tiniest detail of a mosaic tile. It means that you, as well as anyone with that creative gift, can pick out what is attractive and praiseworthy from the most mundane article and develop it to its potential.

When an architect sees a huge rock or a gnarled tree in the middle of a site, he could decide to showcase its rough hew within the building he designs. If he notices the charming slant of sunlight, he might orient his windows to catch the rays. This ability is a gift of awareness, a predisposition to be awed by nature. However, you do not have to be an architect to own this gift. All one needs is an appreciative nature and openness to the good intrinsic in the world.

Play active role

To choose to live as an architect means that you constantly decide to play an active role in the world as mover, creator, motivator, such that the work you do inspires, fulfills and delights yourself as well as others.

You are a dynamic player in the world. You can enable clients to concretize their dreams. You can direct and guide co-workers in accomplishing tasks. You can safeguard the environment and ensure the welfare of communities. All these important activities are directly in your hands and the ability to handle them is a gift. Not all people can boast of holding the same responsibility in their corner of society.

Commit yourself

To live as an architect means you commit yourself to building up, improving and making better any situation that life sets before you. Your every action is geared toward this creative role, whether professionally, personally or spiritually. Ever attentive to the guidance of the Master Planner, living architecture means being co-architect of life.

You must be accountable for every structure that rises from your hands, that it will be beneficial to its users and the community at large. You should be answerable for the people whose lives you touch, that your dealings with them are always fair and reasonable. You need to have integrity, an honesty to oneself that recognizes not only the person of this world that you are, but also the person you are meant to be. Discovering and improving yourself in these ways is the most precious gift of all.

FACING
MY STORMS

Realize your gifts

Sometimes, it takes a while to realize your gifts. Occasionally, you may have to get jolted into finding them. One example of self-discovery I learned recently is the miracle that happened to an old friend and colleague, architect Lourdes "Lo" Cabrera-Alviola. I have known Lo since our college days as a lively and likeable person. She had always been professionally aggressive, already talking of complex structures back when I was just designing my first house.

Over the years, Lo and I lost touch, but I presume that she kept the same strong professional drive. A few years ago, I learned that she had undergone the trials of cancer, the pain and uncertainty of the affliction. However, as in the story of Job, armed with the same undying faith in the Lord, the continuing miracle of her healing occurred.

Fascinating book

She documented her journey of faith and discovery in a fascinating book, "Facing My Storms," to proclaim and invite others to share a similar awakening. It is a gift she received that gets better when more people can share. (Note: To learn more about her book, get in touch with her at 0916-3212120.)

Now, we do not all need a painful jolt to wake us up to our blessings. In this season of gift giving, remember to cultivate in yourself the values of appreciativeness, proactiveness and integrity, which are timeless legacies that no one else can give but you. Live with a view to finding the good in whatever life has to offer. Take charge and take responsibility for your corner of the world. Act to build up yourself, enable others and better your surroundings. You do not have to be a professional architect to do that. Anyone can—and must—be the co-architect of his own life.

Bonifacio Global City set to open 'heart and soul' of entire dev't

A NEW AREA AT THE HEART OF BONIFACIO Global City will introduce fresh retail concepts and office spaces to further increase the offerings of the emerging business district.

With a number of offices and over 70 shops, some of which are already open, Bonifacio High Street is primarily a boulevard of anchor stores with offices at the second level and a lush city park located in the middle of the 36-hectare city center of Bonifacio Global City. According to Bonifacio Global City officials, the area is envisioned as the focal point or centerpiece of the 240-hectare business district. "You could consider it the 'heart and soul' of the business district," according to Jun Bisnar, head of commercial operations of Bonifacio Global City.

The entire Bonifacio High Street commercial area is envisioned in its entirety to be close to a kilometer of low-level structures on either side of a major pedestrian thoroughfare reminiscent of Main Street, USA. "The Bonifacio High Street concept replaces the roadway with a pedestrian-friendly linear park as wide as Ayala Avenue."

'Pedestrian highway'

This "pedestrian highway" is conducive to strolling, lounging, as well as people watching amid facilities for the family to enjoy such as unique public art works rock climbing and other sports shops, says Bisnar. Bonifacio High Street further extends to the restaurant and retail row at the ground level of One Serendra and Two Serendra.

The first phase of the pedestrian and retail boulevard measuring 800 meters in length is set to formally open in January 2007. Other phases have been scheduled in the near future. For now, winner stores, cafés and restaurants line either side of the boulevard. The dynamic city center of Bonifacio Global City is bordered by 32nd Street, 5th Avenue, 26th Street and 11th Avenue.

Street activities

According to Miriam O. Katigbak, executive vice president of Ayala Land, Bonifacio High Street activities take place at the street level just like in the Main Street setup. She notes: "The place is primarily relaxed. You will feel right at home in this setting even if you are just in your gym short and trainers."

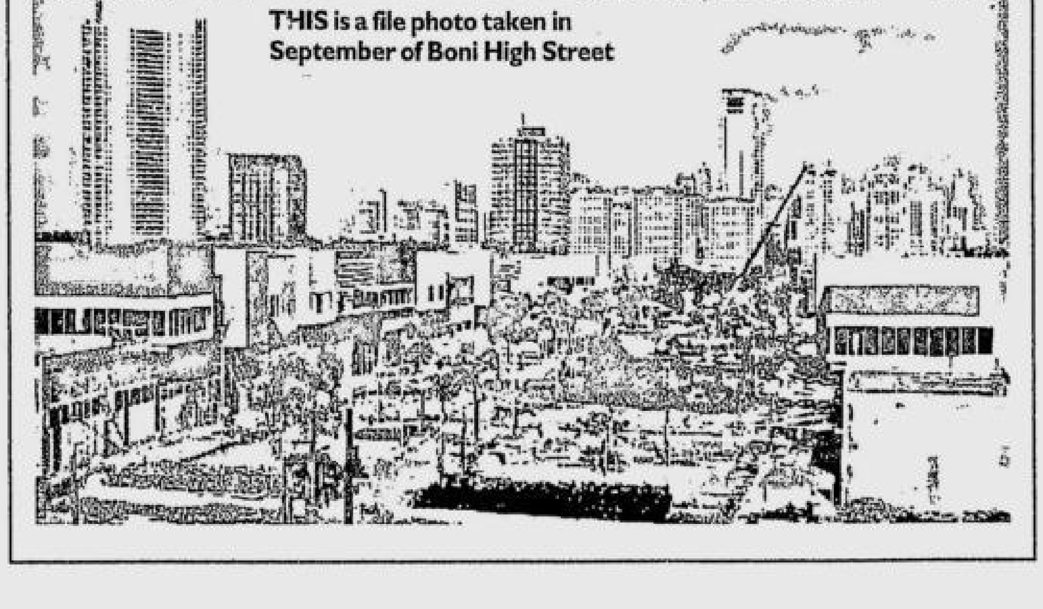
The retail boulevard is subdivided into eight zones, with each zone having its own anchor store ranging from 600 to 800 square meters and carrying complete product lines. Aside from the 14,600-sq-m stretch of retail, Bonifacio High Street also offers 6,000-sq-m retail area within Serendra.

Owing to Bonifacio Global City's easy access to the Makati Central Business District, Bonifacio High Street will likewise have office spaces on the second floor. Gross leasable area is 6,500 sq m and has been leased out to Del Monte, Bayantrade, Makati Eye Laser Center, Integrow Children's Activity Center and Community Innovations.

To spur development

Bisnar foresees that Bonifacio High Street will spur development in Bonifacio Global City as a whole. "As people get used to coming to Bonifacio Global City to shop or do business here, he says, they are more likely to want to live and work here themselves."

He says Bonifacio High Street is likely to speed up the development of the area where over 100 projects are either being planned, constructed or have been completed. The projects include office buildings, residential condo projects as well as buildings for various civic and educational institutions.



THIS is a file photo taken in September of Boni High Street

Phinma subsidiary earns triple certification

AFFORDABLE CONDOMINIUM DEveloper Phinma Property Holdings Corp. recently made a leap in aligning its operations with international standards earning for the company not just one but three international accreditations.

PPHC was awarded by the International Standards Organization (ISO) with two accreditation certificates—ISO 9001 for Quality Management and ISO 14001 for Environmental Management—while also receiving the OHSAS 18001 for Health and Safety Management, making PPHC the first property developer in the country to garner triple international certifications.

"Our triple international accreditation certificates is our contribution to our parent company Phinma's golden anniversary celebration this year, PPHC president and CEO Willie J. Uy says.

A subsidiary of Phinma, the country's leading conglomerate currently celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, PPHC, with more than 4,000 affordable condominiums built to date, was also recognized this year as a "Superbrand" by Superbrands Philippines.

Balanced design features make new Paseo 3 a unique town center

GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT CORP.'S continued creation of competitive, masterplanned communities has emphasized a focus on strength, practicality and long-term value. These traits are inherent in all GDC endeavors, which encompass different developments that make it one of the country's most trusted property developers. Its Laguna-based Greenfield City is a prime example of its various growing business, recreational and residential zones in one exceptional location.

Greenfield City's Paseo De Santa Rosa is fast becoming known as an outlet center that continuously attracts nearby and Metro Manila residents who wish to purchase high-quality sporting goods and lifestyle accessories at bargain prices.

It is also known as an intimate and cozy town center, as its prior structures Paseo 1 and 2 were designed with accessibility, space utilization and unique esthetic features in mind. That attention to detail and balance is replicated on the newly launched Paseo 3, the latest establishment in the area that was designed by RRP-Payumo + Partners and Architects group.

The esteemed architectural firm, tapped to work on the related project again, has lent its considerable planning, programming, designing and coordinating capabilities to conjure up a sound and attractive structure. Its successful partnerships with foreign firms in the last 25 years are a testament to the company's hard work and reliability. The firm has garnered impressive credentials through the years and is among the most reputable ones that are known for diversity and versatility, as exemplified by its numerous commercial, industrial, residential and institutional works.

ARCHITECT Ruben R. Payumo

A different challenge

It was a different challenge, according to architect Ruben R. Payumo, to make this new building enhance and connect with the existing ones.

"It was a challenging experience. We had to go through the process of brainstorming ideas. The way we designed it was to present ideas to link it up with the old one and how it will complement the other developments like future movie houses and entertainment facilities. Designing it was tricky, with the absence of visual contact to vehicular traffic. So, we asked a lot of questions. We wanted Paseo 3 to have its own character to attract new locators as well as returning customers for all locators," Payumo said.

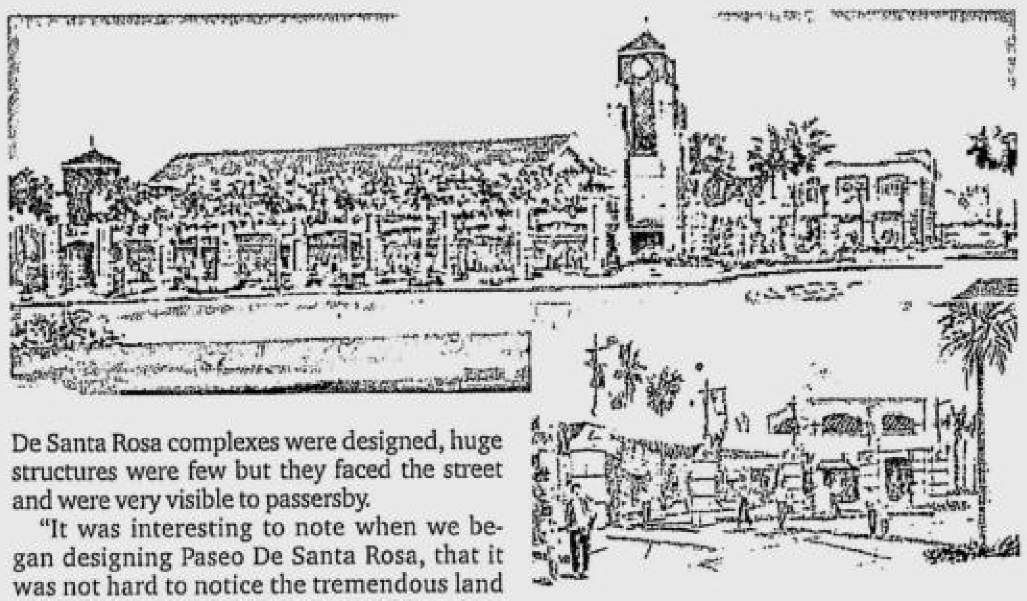
He reminisced that when the original Paseo De Santa Rosa complexes were designed, huge structures were few but they faced the street and were very visible to passersby.

"It was interesting to note when we began designing Paseo De Santa Rosa, that it was not hard to notice the tremendous land available. So, we asked Greenfield Development what they intended to do with the land. Just to get a feel of what the future holds for Paseo De Santa Rosa. We also wanted to steer away from the typical mall. We wanted to offer a more pleasant shopping experience—an arcade with a great atmosphere," he said.

Changes with the approach

Payumo expounded that there were changes with their approach to Paseo 3. "It's very, very different. The design of the new Paseo 3 had to go through with a lot of exchange of ideas as we try to figure out what to do and how to achieve the unique look for this project. The goal was for Paseo 3 to have the heart and life of its own that will evolve by itself. So, we had to have something like a Promenade that leads to the existing walkway going to the old establishment, to create a seamless connection between the two developments, making it as one. We also had to experience the vibrant nightlife at Paseo De Santa Rosa to be able to link it up with Paseo 3. We want to enhance what is already there—and explore that. Hopefully, it grows from there," he said.

Payumo is confident that Paseo De Santa



GREENFIELD City's commercial zone has added a third new phase to its Paseo de Sta. Rosa commercial and retail town center.

BALANCED/ B2-5

New urbanism comes to Canlubang

MOLDEX REALTY MARKETING INC. recently unveiled Alegria @ Dos Rios, a new community that will bring forth a new lifestyle in the area.

The project offers a new townscape for neighborly living that blends the traditions of the past with the modern amenities of the present. Inspired by the historic town of Vigan or Ciudad Fernandina, Alegria was conceptualized to foster a neighborly community, an answer to the increasing number of Filipinos who are searching for a well-balanced lifestyle.

The fast-paced living has taken its toll on Filipino urbanites and they are now looking for alternative lifestyles that can conveniently fuse their need for modern conveniences and still keep them grounded on traditions that they grew up with, like having enough time with the family.

New urbanism

The concept of new urbanism was adapted for the subdivision setup where the homes are closely-knit to foster neighborhood interaction. The streets are free of unsightly electrical posts and everything is just a short walk or a leisurely bike trip away.

With its Spanish- inspired theme, the subdivision brings people back to the old days and the old ways and yet it allows them to enjoy the convenience of modern living. Like a town plaza, the clubhouse with its coffee lounge, game room and multi-purpose hall serves as the activity center of the community. The swimming pool, jogging lanes, basketball and tennis courts, playgrounds and tropical landscape treatment serves as a prime venue for social interaction amongst neighbors.

Ideal community

Located between the foothills of Tagaytay and the fields surrounding Laguna de Bay, the project is marked by the beautiful rolling terrain and abundant water supply, making it an ideal place for a modern, integrated and master-planned community. Its cool climate and verdant surroundings are an added bonus for the ideal tropical Hispanic community.

Although Alegria @ Dos Rios is set amid an industrial park in Canlubang, it is also within the periphery of three golf country clubs and some of the best schools in the area. Future plans within the vicinity point out to one of the most promising developments in the south and Alegria@ Dos Rios is right in the middle of it.

Alinmang araw, Alinmang kulay, Sitting pretty ka.

SUPER VULCASEAL COLORS

Ipinakikilala ang bagong Super Vulcaseal Colors Elastomeric Sealant! The 1st colored elastomeric sealant na sadyang ginawa para sa colored roofs!

Walang butas na di kayang tapalan! Matindi sa kahit anong klaseng tapalan! Mapa-bubong, alulod o drain man!

Walang tagas dahil sa advanced elastomeric sealing formula nito, matindi ang kapit kahit basa*! Kaya walang lusot ang tulo! (*There should be no water pressure when applying on wet surfaces.)

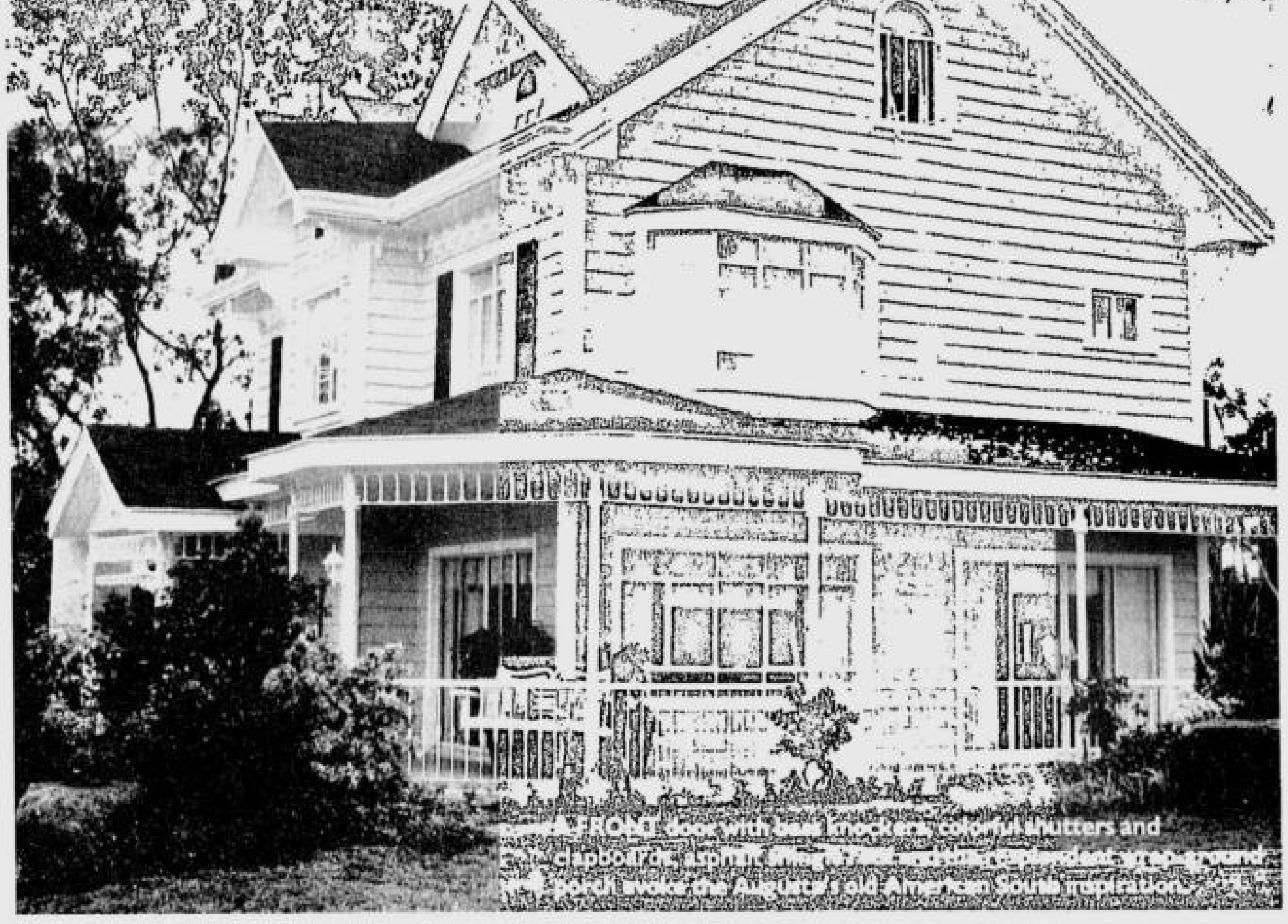
MABISA KAHIT SA BASA*

Walang bakas dahil mabibili in Red, Beige at Green colors na karaniwang kulay ng mga prepainted roofs! Kaya di halata ang tapal!

Super Tapal na, Super Dikit pa... Super Colored pa!

A new innovation from Bostik

WIDE windows and access to the porch lends a view of the pocket garden from the Augusta's homey living area.



FRONT door with [illegible] knockers, colorful shutters and clapboards, [illegible] porch evoke the Augusta's old American South inspiration.

Brittany's Georgia Club unveils Augusta model home

GEORGIA CLUB, MAVERICK BRITTANY Corp.'s high-end residential community in Sta. Rosa, Laguna inspired by the American South, unveils its just-completed Augusta model residence, a gem of a home that reveals much about the genteel and refined quality of life residents may expect from this enclave.

Known for its masterplanned "lifescapes"—each a community with a theme inspired by one of the world's best destinations that brings the enjoyment of life to a new level—Brittany creates in Georgia Club such a "lifescape," one evoking the charm, leisure and neighborliness that was enjoyed by the old aristocracy of the American South. Georgia Club, launched only last February, is synonymous for gracious living, recalling the appeal of homes and communities that remain in the famous, historic area from Savannah to Athens in the US state of Georgia.

Thematic origin

True to its thematic origin, Augusta, like other Georgia Club residences, features a symmetrical façade and gabled roof. Architectural features include evenly spaced windows, dormers and high ceilings. Shaded verandas and tall windows are designed to admit each visiting breeze.

Augusta's façade displays accents of color with bottle green shutters, white and butter yellow clapboards, asphalt shingle roof, and a front door replete with brass knockers. Augusta has a very sprawling wrap-around porch with access from the dining and living areas, perfect for neighborly visits, or weekend family breakfasts, or enjoying a delightful novel, or just snoozing contentedly on quiet afternoons.

It boasts of three bedrooms, each with their own toilet and bath while the master's bedroom features a bay window and a walk-in closet as well as a toilet and bath with tub. A family room on the second floor features wide sliding doors which open to a balcony. The attic has ample space for one side to be made into an extra bedroom for staying guests while the opposite area may be converted into an entertainment room for the whole family. The Augusta also has a four-car garage, auxiliary kitchen, maid's and driver's quarters with toilet and bath.

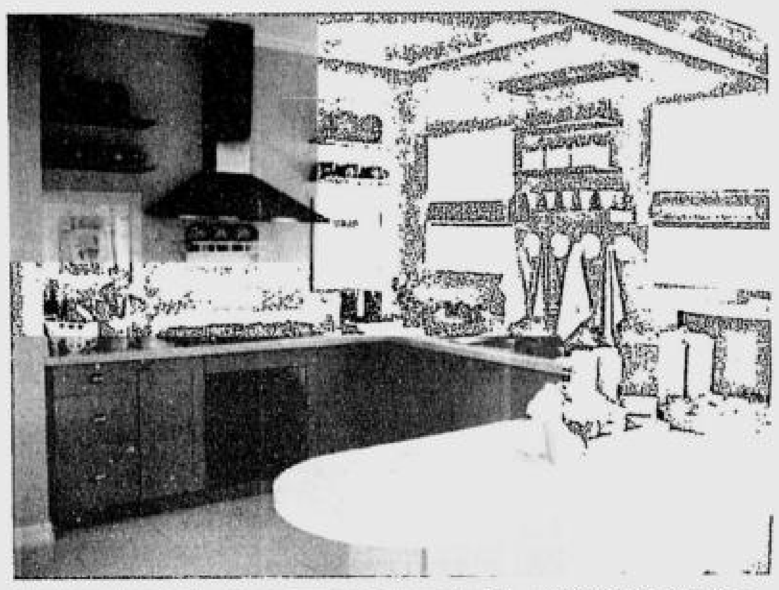
EACH dining experience with family and friends is highlighted by the surrounding landscape and natural lighting and ventilation.

Dimensions

Mid-range in the array of Georgia Club model homes with respect to dimensions, Augusta encompasses 280 sq m of floor area. Other Georgia Club models soon to rise beside Augusta are Madison with a 240-sq-m floor area and the largest model Tara with a 300-sq-m floor area.

Georgia Club features a ratio of 40:60 open space to residential development, allowing residents to enjoy nature from adjacent pocket gardens, gazebos, jogging paths and the shade of mature trees from their own porch.

In partnership with the Quiros family which pioneered residential developments in Sta. Rosa, Brittany offers Georgia Club as a haven for families who are affiliated with the information technology and automobile industries in the area.



NATURAL lighting coming in from wide windows enlivens the roomy kitchen.

THE ATTIC'S ample space is converted into a shabby chic bedroom.

Accessible

Adding to Georgia Club's attractions is its accessibility to a range of educational facilities that are found close by, like the soon-to-rise UST's teaching hospital, De La Salle University-Canlubang, St. Scholastica's College, Don Bosco and the Ateneo Graduate School, as well as Acacia School which offers preschool education.

Georgia Club is also a few minutes drive from recreational facilities such as the Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club and The Country Club and with its nearness to the Canlubang Golf and Country Club and vacation spots such as Tagaytay and Batangas, making it perfect for individuals and families who value relaxation and leisure activities.

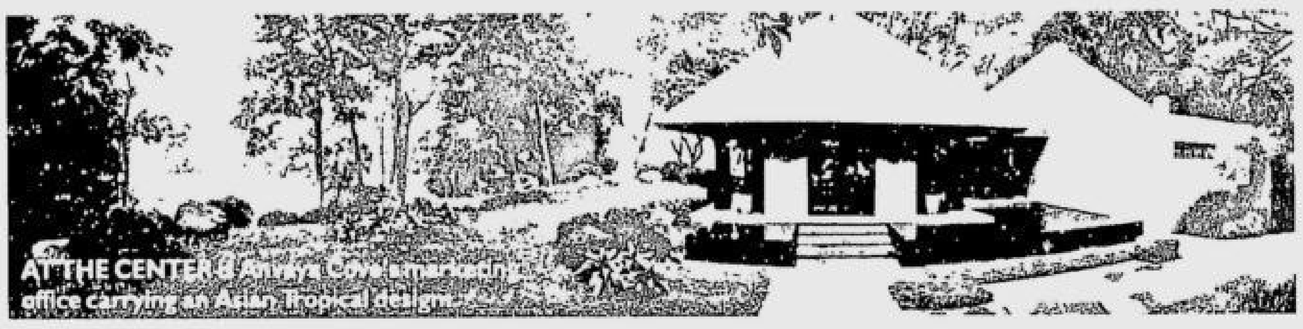
Georgia Club is located only a 25-minute drive from Alabang and 45 minutes away from the Makati CBD via the newly opened Asia Brewery Greenfield Exit.

Backdrops

Augusta and other residences at Georgia Club will have backdrops of naturally beautiful land, of tall trees and sprawling plains. The community and its homes are envisioned to encourage and preserve a way of life that recognizes the value of family, friendships and neighborly interaction.

Residents will find respite in the natural beauty of Georgia Club, with greenery and gardens balancing architecture with rusticity.

Georgia Club, with its evocation of American Southern charm, will indeed provide a unique, welcoming "lifescape."



AT THE CENTER of Anvaya Cove's marketing office carrying an Asian tropical design.

Anvaya landscape plan builds on property's pristine qualities

VISITORS TO ANVAYA COVE ARE treated to an intimate and gradual introduction to its surroundings. From the entrance gate, through a winding road and to the beach where the property's main amenities are located, the enhanced innate beauty of this mountain and beach environment has been designed to grow on the viewer and keep him hooked to it over the long run.

Cristina Comia, senior division manager for Construction Management of Ayala Land, recalls being immensely refreshed by the gentle rustle of bamboo leaves when she first visited the 320-hectare development along the Bataan coast. "We've worked hard to preserve the *lawiswis* or gentle whisper of the bamboo trees and many other natural elements of Anvaya Cove," she says. "Our blueprint simply improves and further enhances the unspoiled surroundings."

The decades-old mango trees, other heritage trees, meandering roads and waterways leave their mark on the visitor who is led to celebrate nature in Anvaya Cove. Comia relates that the ecological trails, "discovery classrooms," obstacle courses and other facilities have all been intended to help the visitor have a keener appreciation of the area's unique environment. Amid this setting, free from many of the distractions of modern living, families are also envisioned to come together through amenities like camping and picnic grounds.

Asian tropical theme

Cogon grass, green bamboo, and other tropical plants endemic to the Bataan peninsula welcome the visitor to the high-end luxury development by Ayala Land. An Asian tropical theme was simply the most appropriate for the area, says Comia, who has aligned her plans to keep the pristine quality of the property.

Great pains were taken to achieve a nonartificial, all-natural look, she relates. Tiles of Bermuda grass, for instance, were not simply laid out on the green areas as is usually done. Rather, the planners resorted to hydroseeding. The planting method makes use of a compactor to distribute grass seeds so that when they mature, they will have deeply embedded roots that firmly grasp the soil. This gives the grass a grown-in look, making it seem like it grew naturally instead of being planted.

THE BIG boulders found in various areas of Anvaya Cove were preserved and perfectly placed together with the flora surrounding it.

Aside from providing a genuine tropical Asian character to the Anvaya Cove landscape, cogon grass helps prevent soil erosion during downpours—a vital consideration for any development on a hilly topography, according to Jomar Borja of Tropic Asia, which served as Ayala Land's landscape consultant.

Natural look

Saplings of different plant species endemic to the Bataan forest like the mahogany, narra, fire tree, tanglad, alibangbang and cupang were sourced and planted in clusters along the road to ensure a natural look for the spine road. In some areas, like the stretch from the entrance to the view pavilion, acapulcos or small trees with vibrant, yellow flowers sprouted on their own and surprisingly, blended well with the landscape.

To complement the flora, gigantic boulders found within the property serve as focal points in some areas. A few pieces were moved to more strategic locations like the marketing pavilion where the boulders now serve as places where visitors can sit and take in the panoramic views of mountains meeting the sea.

For lights, Comia chose to place low-lying bollards along the roadway instead of standard electric posts. Low intensity lights were used to illuminate the path of future residents and visitors, as well as to ensure that the sea turtles or *pawikans* would not be disturbed as they laid their eggs on the shores of Ilingin Bay. *Pawikans* are very sensitive to strong lights, Comia explains.

Other species of fauna that need unspoiled natural surroundings will continue to find a home in Anvaya Cove.

Celebrating the home and the family

THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY WILL mount the first real estate festival called the Philippine Properties Festival 2007, amid a "fiesta" atmosphere that is meant to celebrate two basic blessings—the home and the family.

The home is not just a place where families eat, sleep and live, but it is also the embodiment of a family's strong ties. Having their own home remains to be the biggest dream and blessing of every family, aside from maintaining a strong sense of familial bonding.

Aside from celebrating these two blessings, the Philippine Properties Festival 2007 shall also be a pompous showcase of the many developments, products and activities happening within the industry and its numerous achievements and contributions to the economy.

Momentous event

The Philippine Properties Festival 2007 will be a grand and momentous event that is anchored on three other sub-events: the Philippine Properties Exposition 2007, the first-of-its-kind Philippine Properties Beauty Pageant, and another first, a grand float parade called "Kasaysayan ng Pabahay sa Pilipinas."

The expo will showcase the developments and other options available right now in the real estate market. It will feature other property investments like golf and country clubs, hotels, leisure spots and others.

To attract OFWs

Showcasing these developments is meant to attract the country's burgeoning number of overseas Filipino workers, the country's newest heroes and substantial contributors to our economy. The expo will feature comprehensive purchase and investment options that are available right now, to have OFWs rediscover their roots and enjoy the beauty of their native land in their retirement or in providing a roof over the heads of their loved ones and relatives left here.

The expo will also gather real estate industry experts and other big name industry personalities to facilitate lectures and seminars that will discuss common concerns like securing permits, financing, interior design and even building houses on a tight budget. It will also be a family-oriented event as there will be livelihood and education lectures, a kiddie zone, plus performances from some of the country's top solo and group acts to lend some musical flavor to the expo.

Beauty pageant

The Philippine Properties Beauty Pageant, on the other hand, is a beauty and talent search that aims to find that female champion of the real estate industry.

With the hope of giving the real estate industry a face and a voice, the winner of the first Philippine Properties Beauty Pageant should have not just beauty and brains, but also the character and integrity, as she will embody the many advocacies and aspirations of this important industry.

Lastly, the "Kasaysayan ng Pabahay sa Pilipinas" will retrace the full history of housing in the country—from the early primitive Filipinos living in caves and other mountain dwellings, to nipa huts and turn-of-the-century houses, and down to the low, mid and high-end real estate developments known today.

Early fiesta mood

This visual spectacle of sorts shall also highlight the various housing projects that the government has made available to many Filipinos throughout the years, in its effort to provide sufficient and suitable housing to homeless citizens still striving to put a decent roof over their heads.

If you're up for an early "fiesta" mood to start the year, catch the Philippine Properties Festival 2007, which will happen from Jan. 25 to 28, 2007, at the Entertainment Mall of SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City. For details, call Chel Osorio or Zeny Danga at 864-0224, 819-2058 to 59 or Jordan Osorio at 0915-5179496, e-mail tha@ashleyanderby.com, or visit www.ashleyandderby.com.

Mediterranean-style community continues to charm home buyers

SM DEVELOPMENT CORP.'S VERY first residential resort community, Chateau Elysee, welcomed its very first families and residents when it turned over the Concorde phase, and second cluster Lafayette last June. Since then, Chateau Elysee has transformed into a throbbing, lively community of starting families and upwardly mobile professionals who enjoy the exclusive atmosphere and laid-back, resort-in-the-city ambience of Bicutan's finest address.

The presence of a warm, close community coupled with Chateau Elysee's distinct advantages of location, planning and design, amenities, and backed by the well-trusted SM name, have created continuous interest and clamor for Chateau among the middle-income families.

Two new clusters are set to follow Lafayette and Concorde. Eiffel is already halfway through construction while plans for the newest building, Ritz, are already final. Market uptake for Eiffel building is very positive and it is enjoying brisk sales.

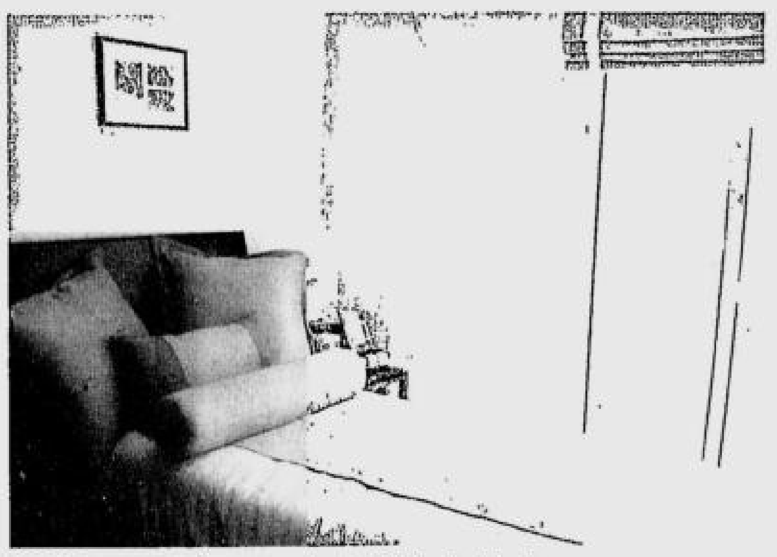
The best of both worlds

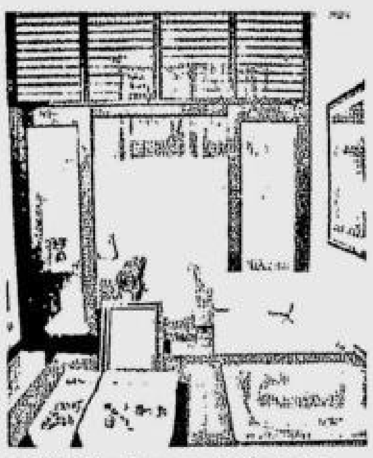
Chateau Elysee is the first manifestation of SM Development's series of residential properties anchored on an SM mall. Its enviable position allows homeowners and residents the best of both worlds—the everything-at-your-fingertips lifestyle, where you are at the center of it all, and the safe, enclosed haven of a community where you can shut yourself from the bustle of the city.

Aside from this strategic intent to give every Chateau resident the ease of choosing between the active and relaxed aspects of living, the community also boasts of first-class leisure amenities to imbibe a truly resort feel in the tradition of luxury homes of the Mediterranean.

The centerpiece of the community is the majestic clubhouse that looks out to a stunning free-form swimming pool. At night, it is a dramatic venue for community socials, intimate parties and group games. Daytime, it becomes a gathering place for families to meet and children to play freely and safely.

All these elements come into play in making Chateau Elysee a desired community to belong to among families and professionals in Metro South. With more enhancements planned and new clusters rising, Bicutan's premier residence can only be expected to continue its burgeoning into a dynamic, vibrant yet refreshingly serene community.


WAKE up to a radiant morning in this typical bedroom.


LIVING is a breeze at Chateau Elysee's beautifully laid out homes.

STARTING families will find a fitting community to live and grow in at Chateau Elysee.

Balanced design. . .

From page B2-3

Rosa will continue to attract a broader clientele in many years to come. He believes that the town complex is a unique, quaint place to experience, mainly because of the clean, worry-free environment that's very conducive to outdoor dining and relaxation. He commended GDC for the smooth working relationship over Paseo 3.

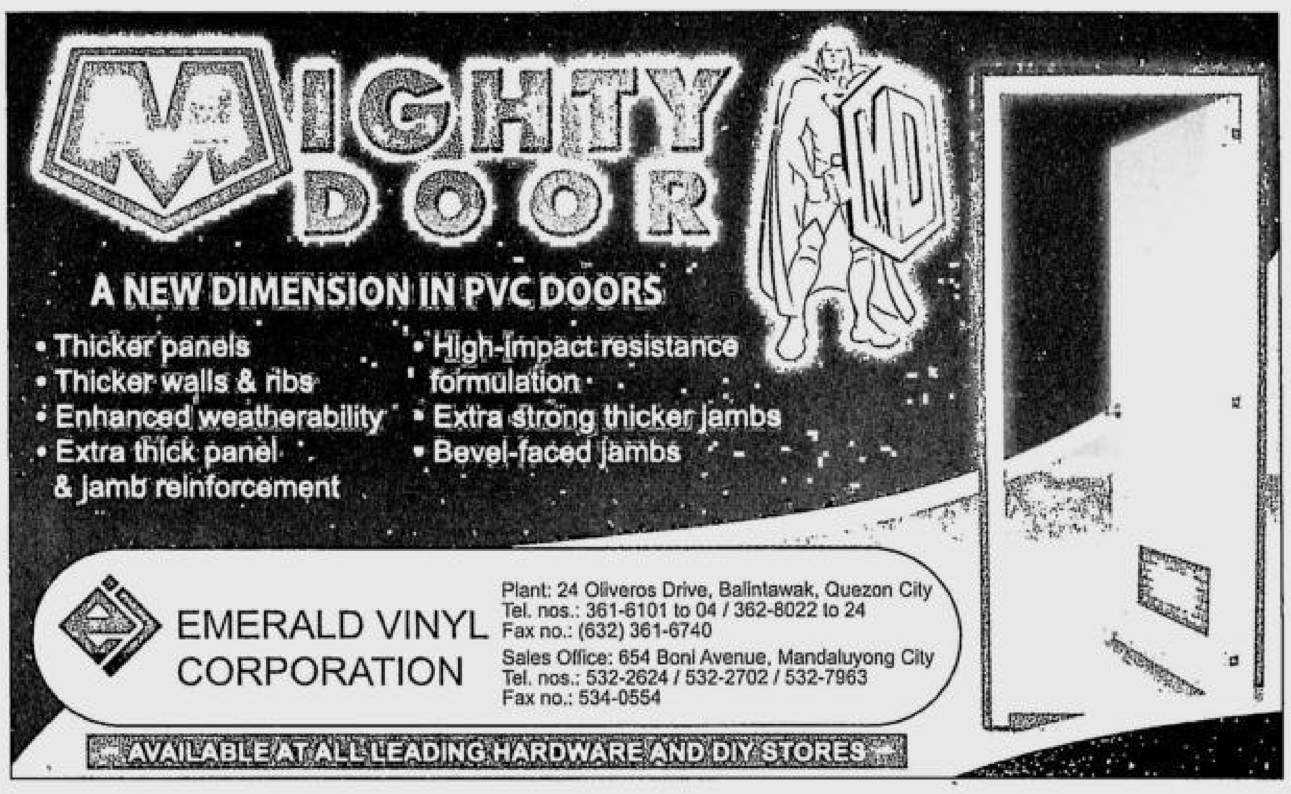
"There were a lot dialogues and presentations. I must say it was a healthy, professional dialogue between us and Greenfield Development. They were open-minded and easy to work with because they listen to your concept and ideas."

Locators

The newly launched Paseo 3 brings together upcoming and established locators such as Tapa King and Brothers Burger along with more recent dining destinations like Steak MD, Umenoya, Oyako Korean & Japanese Restaurant, Takeshi Restaurant, ICHI Japanese Restaurant, Mulan Chinese Restaurant, Poquito Mas, Babycakes, Rice Bowl, Michell's Cakes & Pastries and Jamarra Bar.

The new retail strip also offers shoppers a wide array of establishments for basic and specialized needs, like Han-A-Reum Mart, Gymtastics, Bags 'E, VHB Paseo Skin Care Clinic, Jacquiline Aguilar Ortho Dental Clinic, Trim N' Style Salon, 360 Degrees Spa, Paradigm Salon, Bonny's Barbers Den, Neo Spot internet Café, and Bank of Commerce.

For more information on Paseo De Santa. Rosa and Greenfield Development, please call 420-8003 or (049) 541-2845, e-mail marketing@greenfield.com.ph or log on to www.greenfield.com.ph.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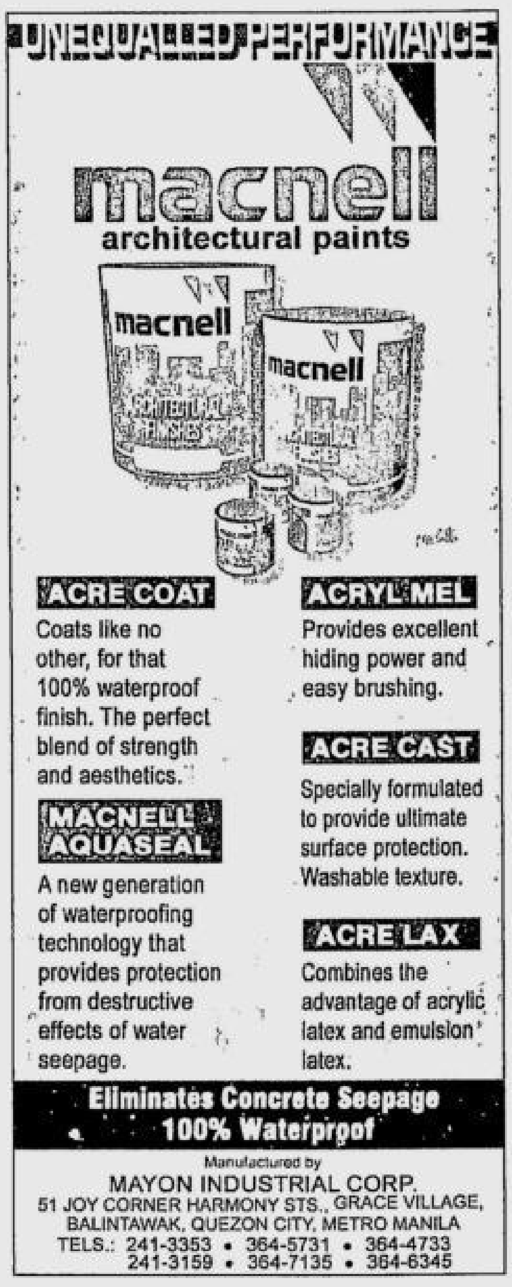
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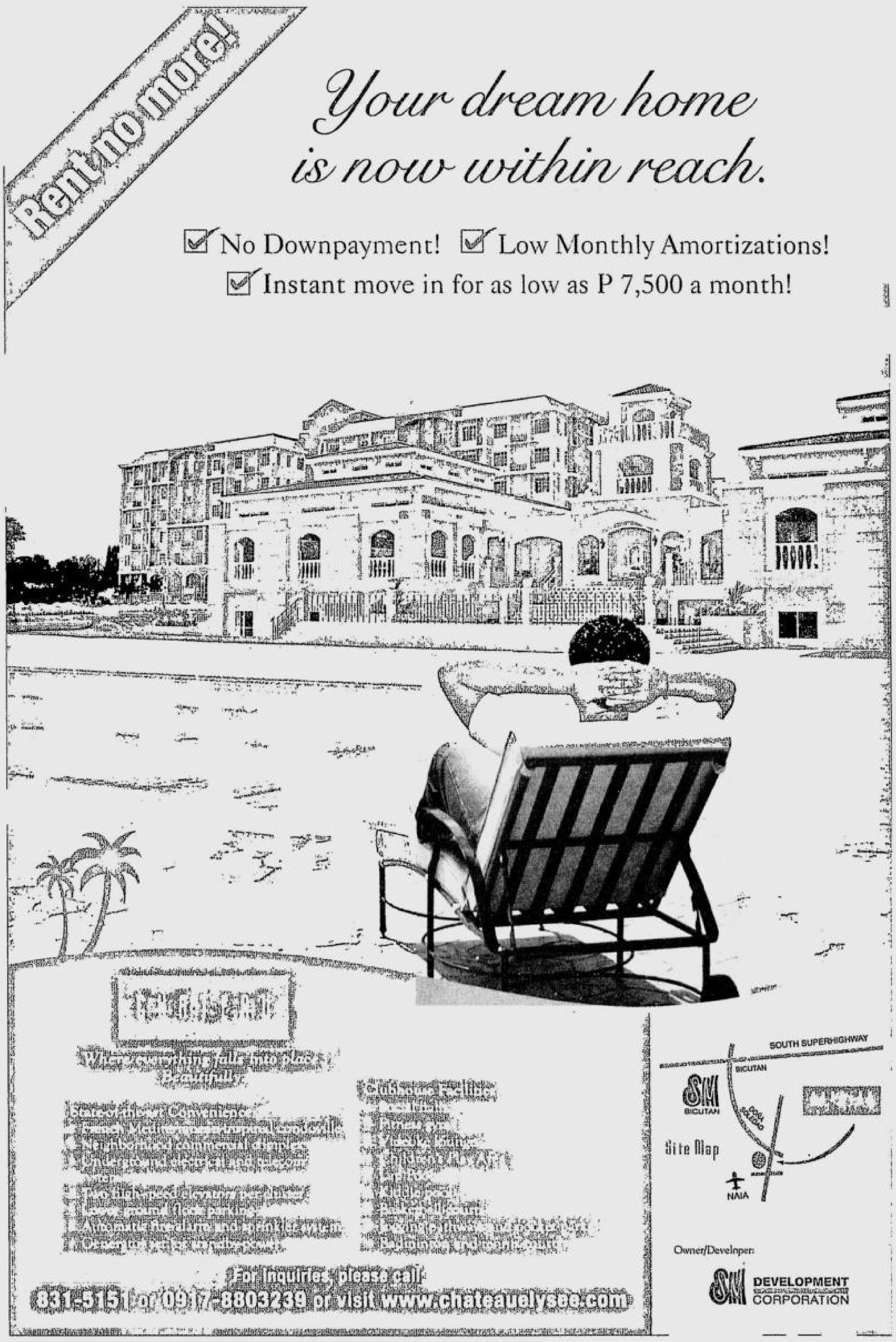
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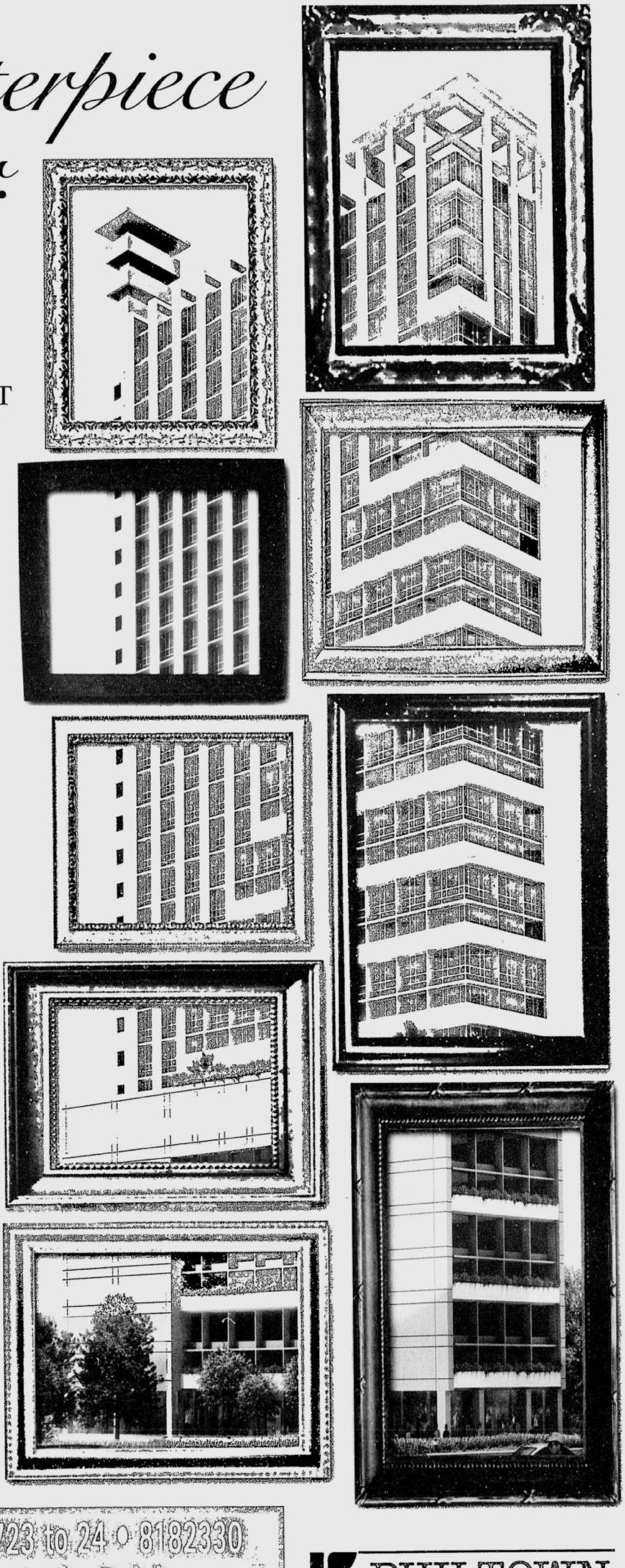

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Super!Countdown
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Dreamgirls

Super! exclusive Pam Pastor jams with page E **Norah Jones**

Three queens of the new scene Georina Wilson, Vicky Herrera, page C2 **and Helena Belmonte**

Gino dela Paz probes page D1 **DJ Ferry Corsten**

Nokia says 'Black is the new black' page D2

Photography: CHARLES LU of Wildbunch
Styling: ROSARIO HERRER of Stylelab
Sittings Editor: DAVID MILAN
Make-up: XENG ZULUETA of Shu Uemura
Hair: JANET DE RAMA using Kiehl's Styrex Series
Cover Stars: VICKY HERRERA, GEORGINA WILSON and HELENA BELMONTE

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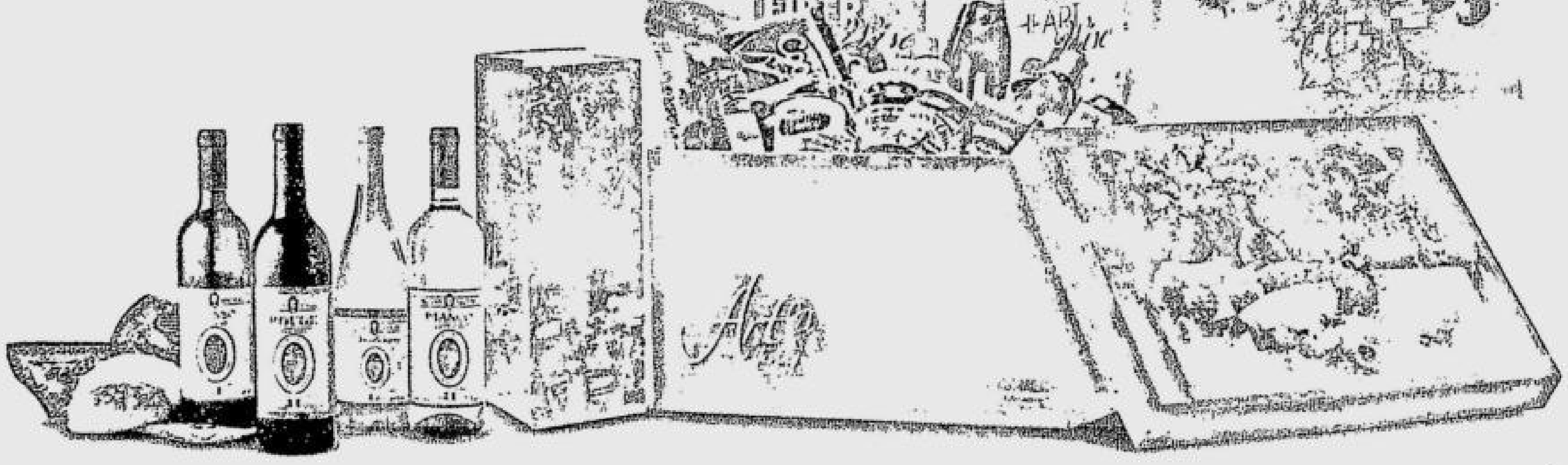

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VICKY HERRERA

The thing about Christmas Season is it teaches you alot about giving as much as receiving. It's the time of year when you can sit down and look back on how much you've grown these last twelve months. It's the time when my family is finally complete and my friends come back home.

This season I plan to wear a smile on my face. That always works with any outfit anyway.

The gift I want this Christmas is new sneakers and Jeans would do very nicely.

The most special person I'll give a gift to are the loves of my life.

My Christmas soundtrack is Santa Baby Eartha Kitt, Ain't Misbehavin by Eartha Kitt, Cheek to Cheek by Ella Fitzgerald with Louis Armstrong, A Fine Romance by Ella Fitzgerald with Louis Armstrong and Dream a Little Dream of Me by Ella Fitzgerald with Louis Armstrong. I think this season I'll take a break from my hiphop playlists.

The most unforgettable gift I have ever recieved is a Snow White Doll. It came with a complete set of dwarfs. It was awesome for a 5-year-old girl to receive! I loved my dolls and those Disney princesses back then.

If I was Santa for a day, I would open that naughty versus nice list and find out what's really going on with people. Find out some interesting stuff. I'd probably eat a whole bunch of Oreos too, then hit the gym after so I can fit in the chimneys. It's hard being Santa but someone's gotta do it.

My yultide state of mind is peaceful and content.

GEORGINA WILSON

The thing about Christmas is it creeps up behind your back and makes you think how the year flew by so quickly.

This season, I plan to wear a preppy red Kashieca top.

The gift I want this Christmas is an extended vacation with a trip around the world!

The most special person I'll give a gift is my boyfriend because I pick the best and most meaningful gifts for him and my parents because they love anything I give them.

My Christmas soundtrack is Justin Timberlake! Haha.

The most u
have ever rece
received.

If I was San
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My yuletide
content.

HELENA BELMONTE

The thing about Christmas Season is it is the perfect time to celebrate and be merry! No worries at all and you spend more time with your friends and family.

This season I plan to wear a smile on my face.

The gift I want this Christmas is a special someone!

The most special person I'll give a gift to is my mom. I really really have to give her a good gift this year.

My Christmas soundtrack is I have this really packed folder in my iTunes filled with all Holiday songs. I've been playing it since the start of December.

If I was santa for a day, I would give more gifts to my loved ones! And ride the sleigh and the reindeers to go around the world!

My yultide state of mind is Happy and excited.

Photography: Cha
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On Vicky and Helena:
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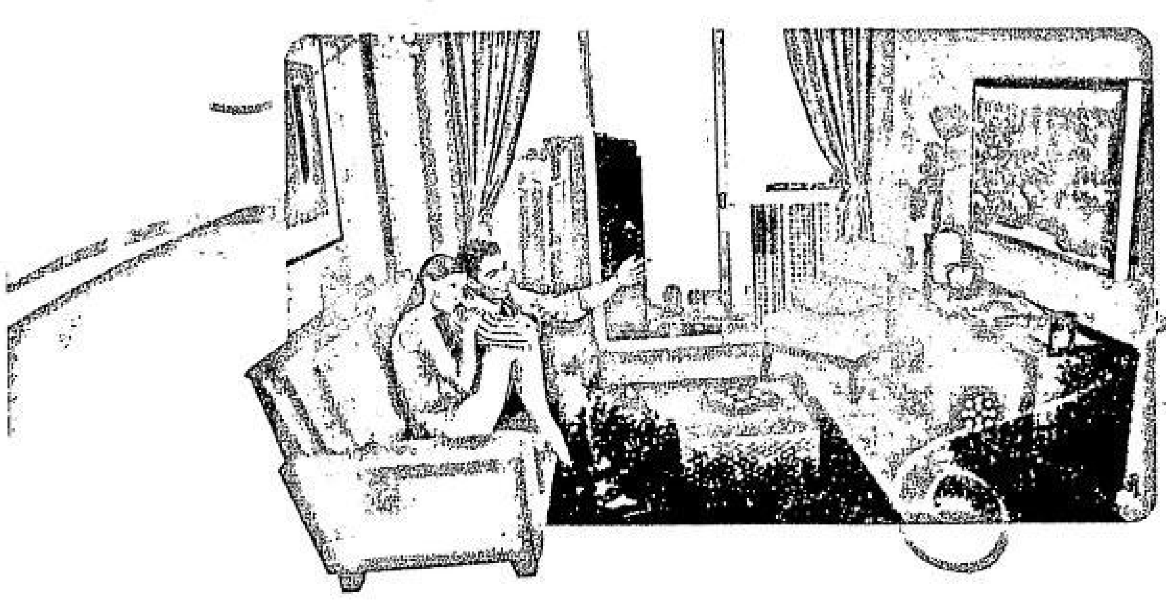

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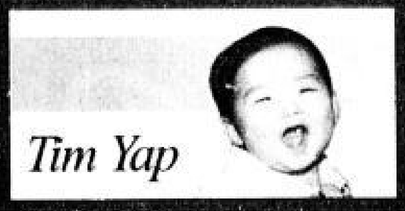
hree queens of the new scene

These dream girls whose combination of charm and chutzpah are enlivening the cityscape with flashing colors



Tim Yap

NOCTURNAL MANILA HAS MORE reasons to turn its head and gape. Enter the scene's newest dream girls whose combination of charm and chutzpah are enlivening the cityscape with flashing colors.

The demimonde of **Georgina**, **Vicky** and **Helena** have plenty of common denominators. No matter what time of the day (or night), they all manage to look like a billion bucks. Fresh. Glowing. Striking.

Georgina Wilson, the scene's reigning "it" chick leads the pack with her long legs and traffic-stopping aura. This girl will make anyone stop at their tracks and stare. Just like viewing a classic piece of artwork, the more you look, the more drawn in you are. No wonder Kashieca's sales have zoomed up with its prized endorser.

The youngest of the Herrera brood known for their good genes, **Vicky Herrera** is now coming to her own. Flip through any magazine and chances are, the beauty and fashion editorials have found a new star—the vivacious Vicky, Penshoppe endorser. Add to that, she is a professional in the truest form and a joy to work with—which makes her fashion's newest favorite.

Kate Moss' long lost sister is now in Manila. **Helena Belmonte** was catapulted into the limelight with her Mega billboards all over the metro. This early, brands are lining up to get her as their new face to endorse everything from beauty products to skin care and beyond. She is naughty-and-nice-and-naughty mixed with a child-like innocence—no wonder she makes temperatures rise and sends the boys' hearts a flutter.

Georgina is a mannequin come to life. **Vicky** is wholesome and sweet, like your adorable little sister. And **Helena** is a vixen in high street frocks. I've been a witness to their blossoming and growth in terms of style and va-va-voom sophistication.

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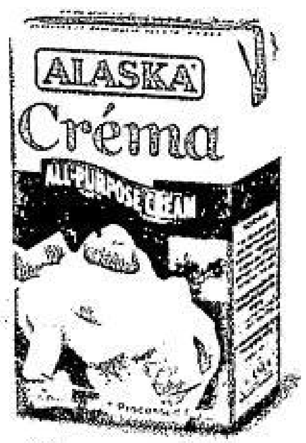
All-Day Gourmét Breakfast

"Steak and eggs for breakfast... love your steak and eggs for breakfast," sings Annie Galup's 1990s song. Eggs turn ordinary food experiences into magical meals. Steak and eggs, ham and eggs, bacon and eggs, bagel and eggs, fish and eggs, and oh so much more! Eggs mixed with flour and milk make great pancakes and fantastic waffles. Eggs wrap and mesh great things together into omelets and scrambles. It is in this spirit that Heaven 'N Eggs was born.

Part of why Heaven 'N Eggs has become so popular in such a short span of time is their passion to bring the most heavenly all-day breakfast experience through innovative dishes and the most worthy ingredients. One of those ingredients that adds that special gourmét touch to their menu is ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM. With its creamy texture and affordable price tag, it's no wonder more and more famous restaurants like Heaven 'N Eggs are switching to Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream to make their dishes taste even better.

Now, for a limited time only, you can indulge in specially made gourmét dishes prepared by Heaven 'N Eggs and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream. Every three weeks, a brand new dish will be showcased. From December 13 to December 27, you can taste the gourmét goodness of Alaska Créma French Toast in Chai Milk Sauce. But the goodness doesn't stop there, because with every purchase of the featured Heaven 'N Eggs dish, you get a free recipe booklet from Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream so you can make your own creative concoctions at home.

So when you're craving for irresistible gourmét dishes, stop by any Heaven 'N Eggs branch at the following locations: CKB Building in Tomas Morato, Quezon City, Ground Floor Glorietta 4, Fuente Circle in Eastwood City, and Market! Market!. Definitely, with Heaven 'N Eggs and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream, you can taste the gourmét goodness anytime, anywhere!



ALASKA Créma Gourmét GOODNESS

Gourmét Goodness at Home.

Alaska Créma French Toast in Chai Milk Sauce

INGREDIENTS:

1	pack	ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM
8	bags	Chai Tea
1/4	cup	honey
1/2	pc	green apple
1/2	cup	fresh coconut milk
4	pcs	French toast bread
1/2	tsp	powder sugar

PROCEDURE:

1. In shallow pan combine ALASKA CREMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM, fresh coconut milk and Chai tea over low heat. Wait until the mixture is reduced to half. Add honey.
2. Pour mixture on top of French toast with caramelized green apple. Sprinkle with powder sugar.

ALASKA
ALASKA MILK CORPORATION

FEATURED DISH OF THE MONTH FROM DEC. 13 to DEC. 27, 2006.

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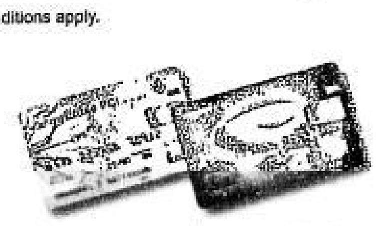
* Terms and conditions apply.



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4659 Series of 2006

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Create your Images of Christmas with Canon.

With Canon's wide range of choices, the best gift under the tree could be from you!

The best thing about a gift is the thought that comes with it. As Christmas trees are assembled and the surprises underneath begin to pile up, the excitement and anticipation leading up to the big day takes over everyone, no matter what the age. Such is the magic of the Christmas spirit. There's nothing quite like the twinkle in the eye and the smile of a loved one after receiving the perfect present. This year, surprise your family and friends with a gift from Canon and make their Christmas a truly memorable one.

With a wide array of products backed by Canon's superior imaging technology, the choices are limitless. Photography aficionados and trigger-happy dads are sure to be grinning ear to ear with an EOS 400D, the newest addition to Canon's celebrated EOS series. This powerful 10.1 megapixel DSLR comes with the new EOS Integrated Cleaning System and a wide selection of over 60 interchangeable lenses to capture the perfect shot.

For trendsetters who love to smile for the camera and prefer a convenient and stylish option they would be thrilled to receive a present from the IXUS series. With IXUS, technology is featured in a sleek form that fits snugly into a pocket or a purse for a memorable night out. The classy 10-megapixel IXUS 900 Ti leads the pack of IXUS models and breaks new ground with a titanium outer shell, ISO high speed setting of up to 1600, and video recording at XGA resolution (1024 x 768 pixels). The IXUS 850 IS on the other hand, is the first camera in the series that has an optical 3.8x optical zoom lens and a 28mm wide-angle lens, while the IXUS i^7 zoom, which comes in four colors (Twilight Sepia, Olive Gray, Precious Rose, and Noble Blue) is perfect for the stylish and fashion-forward people in your life.

For the more active and tech savvy people on your Christmas list, the control and advanced features of the PowerShot series offer high image quality at an affordable price. Using the My Colors function of PowerShot A640, A630 and A710 IS, users can personalize their photos and movies in shooting or playback mode, allowing them to adjust or retouch still images and movies instantly and impress all their friends with their photographic prowess. The PowerShot A640 and A630 are vari-angled which allows for more leeway when taking action packed shots, while the A710 IS boasts of noise reducing features and a customized shutter sound all encased within a traditional design, making it a fitting present for those leaning towards a classic camera look.

After all that smiling for the camera, you can be sure that your family and friends will be eager to see those wonderful photographs. This Christmas, save everyone the time and trouble of going to the nearest developing center by getting a SELPHY Compact Photo Printer. With SELPHY, sixty seconds is all it takes for you to print out waterproof and tear proof photographs. The SELPHY CP730 and CP720 also come with a large 2.0-inch and 1.5 inch LCD monitor, which enables full screen image display when printed directly from memory cards. Christmas with SELPHY ensures that scrapbooks full of holiday memories are made instantly, with the rest of the year a guaranteed photograph treat for the whole family.

For those who want to print more than just pictures, the power of Canon's PIXMA multifunction printers offer the convenience of printing, scanning, and copying from a single machine. Surprise students and your tech-savvy colleagues with the PIXMA MP510, an all-in-one printer with a revolutionary 2-way paper feed system and a 4-color individual ink tank that allows the production of photos with stunning sharpness and detail.

For those who prefer dedicated printers, PIXMA's range of single-function printers would be their best bet. With the ability to deliver borderless printing of up to A4 size, the iP1300 is a cost effective, high quality gift for hardworking students. In the office, save your boss and colleagues the hassle of dropping by the developing center during their precious lunch breaks with a PIXMA iP3300, a compact printer with a 4-color individual tank system that can print out 4 x 6 borderless photos in 47 seconds. For the coolest gift for the direct-photo printing enthusiast, grab the new PIXMA iP6700D, a 6-colour photo printer able to print directly from PictBridge-enabled digital cameras, mobile phones and memory cards. With PIXMA, you can start off everyone's New Year with an advanced, reliable printing partner that makes anything from client reports to full-color book reports in A+ quality.

For the ultimate Canon Christmas, make your friends and family smile bigger with a gift from Canon's superior line of DVD and MiniDV camcorders. Delight them with the new Canon DC22, the world's lightest 2-megapixel DVD camcorder capable of dual layer DVD recording, a surefire treat for movie aficionados looking to have their own home video collection. Another great gift option is the Canon DC100, an entry-level DVD camcorder for those who are still learning the ropes of technology and the aspects of video recording. For those who prefer MiniDV format, the high-resolution widescreen video recording and sleek, compact design of Canon Elura100 and the ZR500/600/700 is sure to make them smile. If you can't decide if dad or kuya would prefer a camcorder or a camera, then the perfect option is the DC40. With a host of powerful camera functions and user-friendly video recording features, you get the best of both worlds.

The greatest thing about a Canon Christmas are the thankful hugs and smiles of your loved ones because no matter which Canon product you choose to get and gift wrap, you're assured of only the best in advanced imaging technology. So take your pick, and this year, make the coolest gifts under the tree come from you.

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*Bluetooth printing requires optional adapter.

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- Photo-Lab-Quality Prints
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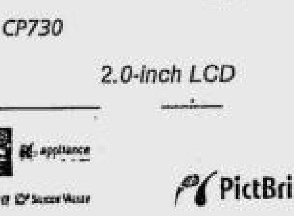
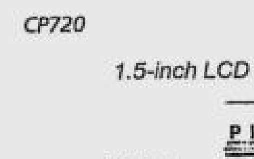


CP730

2.0-inch LCD



CP720

1.5-inch LCD

PictBridge

connect 1 2 3

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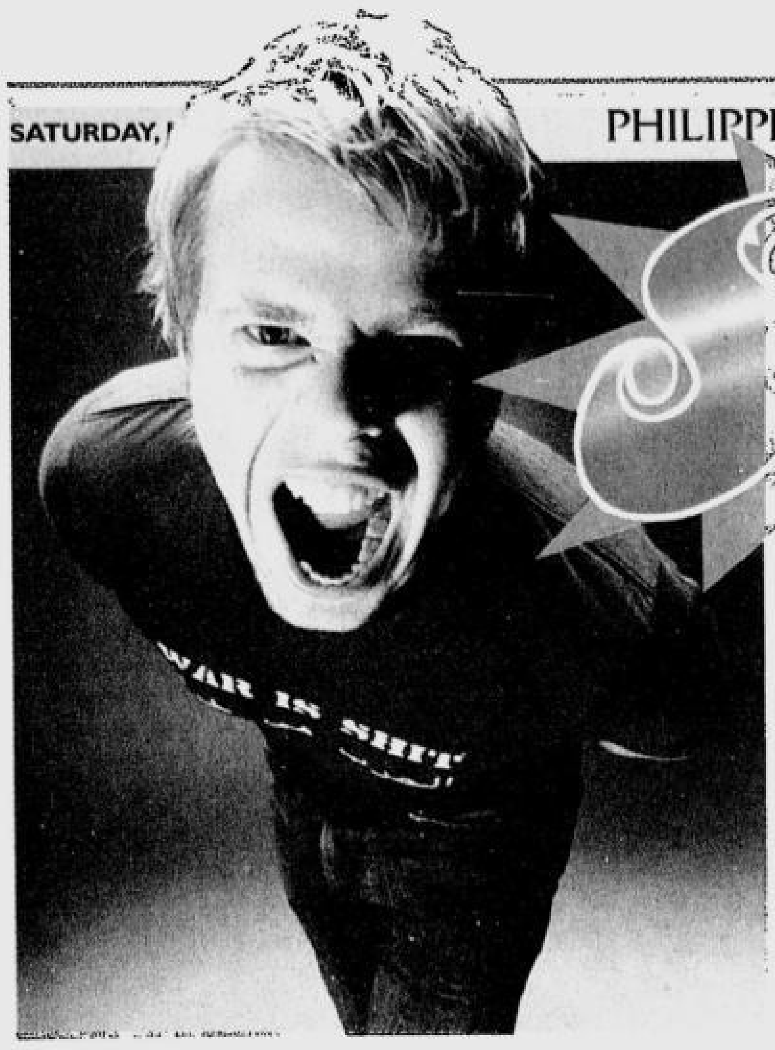

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SUPER! EXCLUSIVE

Fifteen questions for Ferry Corsten

The Dutch dynamo is back to give Manila's dance music devotees a dose of feel-good floorfillers

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

IN JUST A few days, you should be standing shoulder-to-shoulder in the middle of a crowd of a thousand music fans, possibly with tears in your eyes as you lose your mind (then somehow find it) somewhere on the dance floor. The man responsible for your entry into momentary wonderlands answers to the name Ferry Corsten, which could easily be a synonym for One of The Best DJs In The World, Like, Ever. Really.

With his trademark trance now refreshed with electro, pop, house, techno, and breakbeat, Ferry's latest album, "L.E.F," is a huge, sonic "Bite me!" to doomsday critics who still insist that dance music has kicked the bass-heavy bucket. "It's an album that's very diverse and goes from house and electro, to trance and techno. Imagine yourself walking through a club with different sounds that somehow all blend well together, making it a total experience," he says.

So taking time out from filling floors across the globe, DJ Ferry Corsten shares some digital energy with Super! and talks about turning "Ligaya" into a single, getting hooked on "Prison Break," and the big, fun, badass Christmas bash he intends to throw for us in Manila. You have been warned, people.

Birthdays and having guts

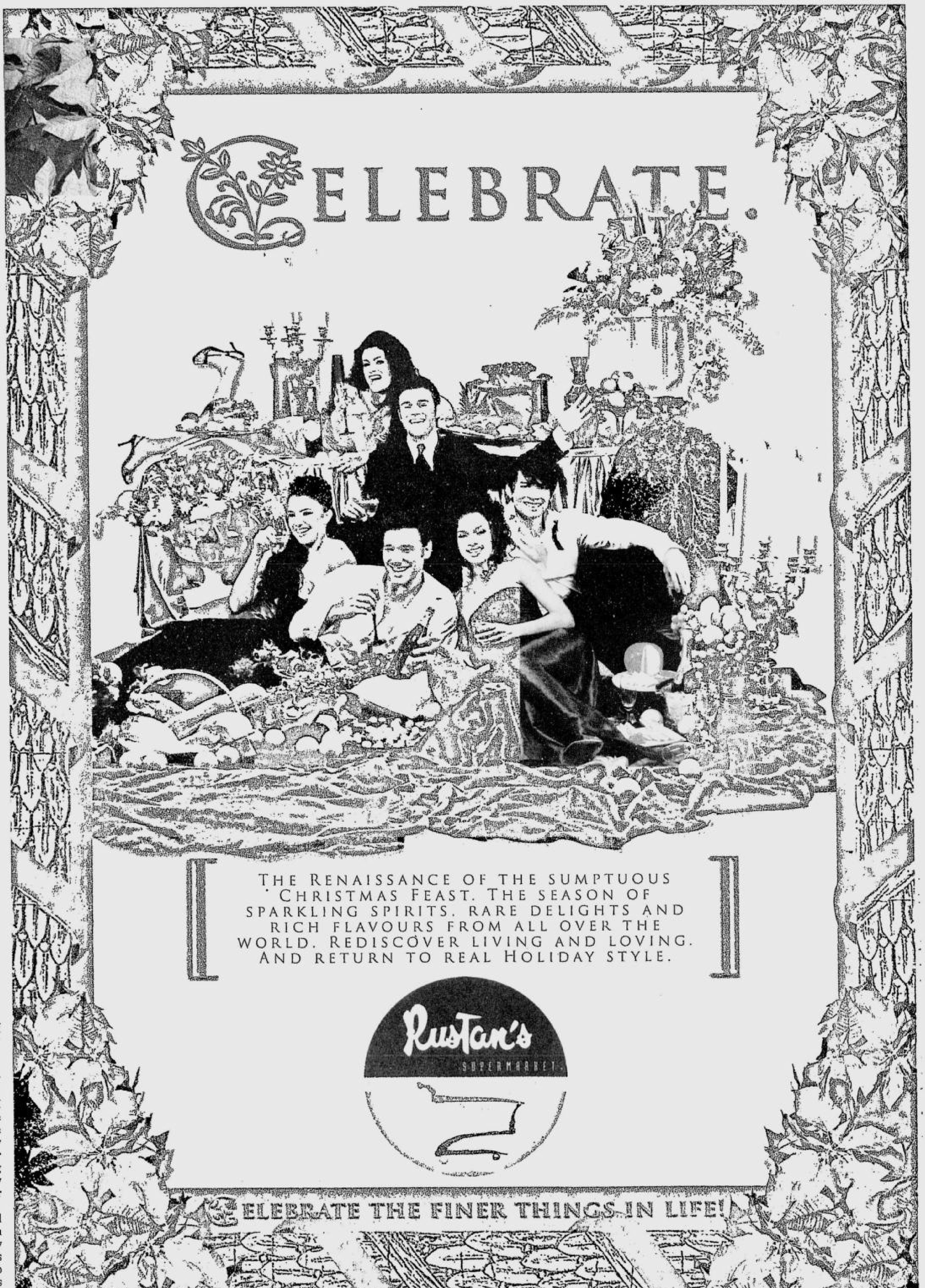
Your birthday was last Dec. 4. Where were you and how did you celebrate it?

Normally I tend to celebrate my birthday at a performance or a gig. The last couple of years I've spent my birthdays in Japan. This year however, I was able to spend my birthday with family.

That's cool. I mean, you must have a relentless schedule and all. How many months of the year do you spend touring anyway? And how does that affect your songwriting?

I pretty much travel all year round. It can definitely affect my production, but that's something I have to live with. It happens very often that I'm in the studio and I'm in the middle of a track and then the weekend is there ... which

FIFTEEN/ D4


CELEBRATE.
THE RENAISSANCE OF THE SUMPTUOUS CHRISTMAS FEAST. THE SEASON OF SPARKLING SPIRITS, RARE DELIGHTS AND RICH FLAVOURS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. REDISCOVER LIVING AND LOVING. AND RETURN TO REAL HOLIDAY STYLE.
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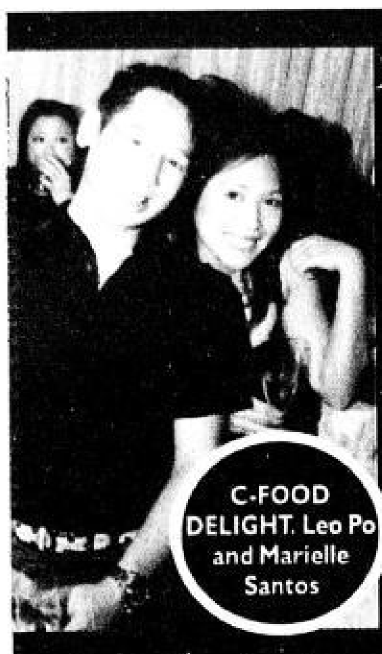


C-FOOD DELIGHT. Leo Po and Marielle Santos

HIP HOP HOORAY. Johnny Verse and Aryanna

ON THE VERGE. Say Alonzo and Uma Khouny

MOD TANDEM: Val delos Santos and Robby Mananquil

SILVER SCREEN STYLE. John Lloyd Cruz and Liz Uy

LA GEAR. Teresa Herrera and Raymond Gutierrez

M
HO
Bian
and

I'm bringing sexy black

NOKIA NOW. Angelique, William Hamilton Whyte and Luanne Erni

MEGATRONS. Carla Sibal, Anton Mendoza and Paolo Gonzalez

By Tim Yap
Photos by Willy Saw, Daniel Tan and Charles Lu

BLACK NEVER LOOKED SO festive. What with the holidaze season in full swing, Manila's partyphiles came all decked out in darker shades of black.

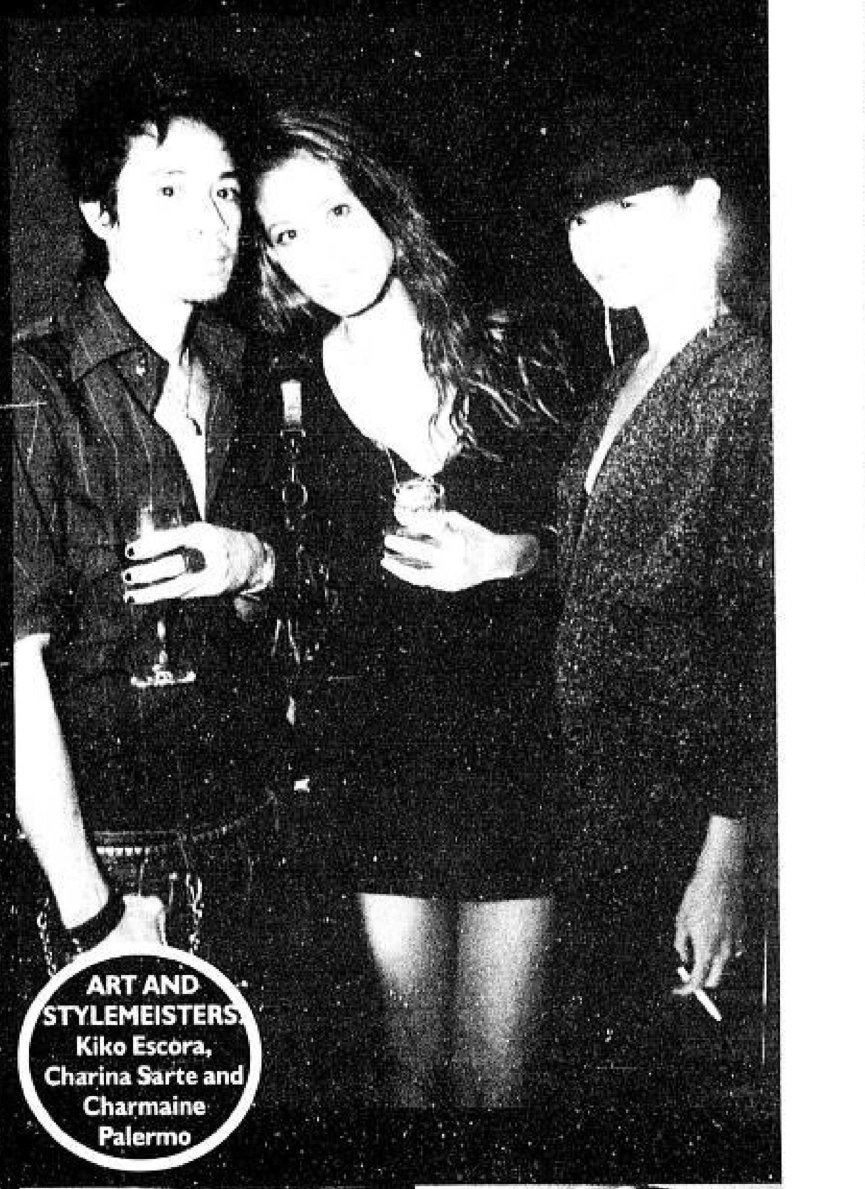
Henri Calayag has transformed my hair to blue black, **Vivian Sarabia** eye-styled me with black specs and **Rajo Laurel** draped me in classic black pinstripes. Mobile phones are no different. Proof of which are the latest black N Series edition phones of mobile giant Nokia, launched Wednesday night at Embassy Cuisine. Bringing sexy back, these mobile phones boast of music-centric features and increased memory, so you can store everything from **Timberlake** to **Tupac**.

It was a black and beautiful evening with the scene's most sought after youth shakers and headturners in full attendance. **Jessica Guevarra**'s Look Models served as yummy eye candy as hostesses **Bianca Valerio** and **Bubbles Paraiso** boozed the crowd up with an endless supply of Belvedere vodka, Tequila 1800, Tequila Rose and Jack Daniel's, courtesy of Spencer Ty of Premier Wines and Spirits. Rene Barbier Wines flowed freely as well.

It was a night of firsts—a first for me to collaborate with **Keren Pascual** (and now manager to **Zanjoe Marrudo** and **Enchong Dee**), a colleague I have long respected for his longevity in the industry. My Embassy partner DJ **Jon Herrera** bridged this partnership, and the result was sheer bliss-in black at that.

Since music makes the people come together (thanks Mama **Madonna**), **Roby Sanchez** of Tribu Manila provided percussion beats and electronic hits to get the partyphiles to get their sexy on. Right before the much-awaited part of the night (the raffle, of course), I was having a ball grooving with Nokia general manager **William Hamilton Whyte** and soon-to-be-wife **Angelique**, along with Nokia navigators **Grace del Callar, Mike Smith** and **Luanne Erni**.

The whole evening was one head bobbing experience as beats and bubbly made me dream of getting my hands on these new black babies. Because as some of them say, "When you go black, you'll never go back."



ART AND STYLEMEISTERS. Kiko Escora, Charina Sarte and Charmaine Palermo

LEFT TO RIGHT. Ricky Delgado, Patrick Reyno, Jenni Epperson, Keren Pascual, Vicky Zubiri, Maurice Arcache and Tim Yap

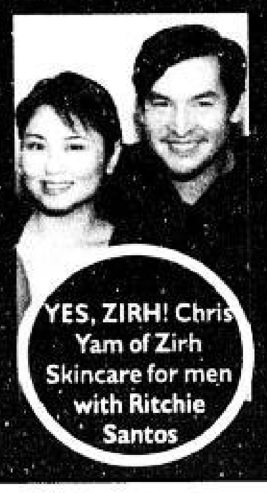
RATED R. Rissa Samson looks younger than ever

STYLE MANUAL. RJ Ledesma and Leica Carpo

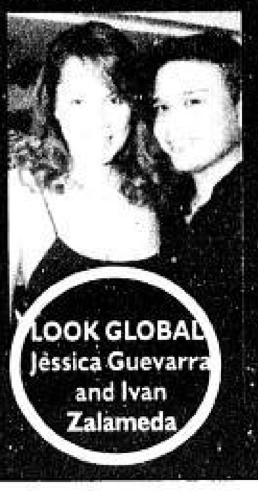
SEXY SOIREE. Fitz Puyat and Antoinette Taus

STYLE COUP. Ciara Sevilla ans Stewart Eadie from Edinburgh

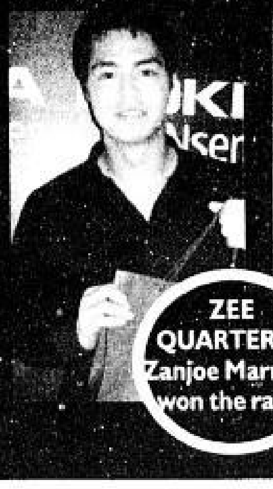
PARISH PALS. Vanessa and Miguel Pastor



YES, ZIRH! Chris Yam of Zirh Skincare for men with Ritchie Santos



LOOK GLOBAL Jessica Guevarra and Ivan Zalameda



ZEE QUARTERLY. Zanjoe Marrudo won the raffle

POWER PLAY. Ben Chan and Mons Romulo-Tantoco

SUPER! SELECTIONS

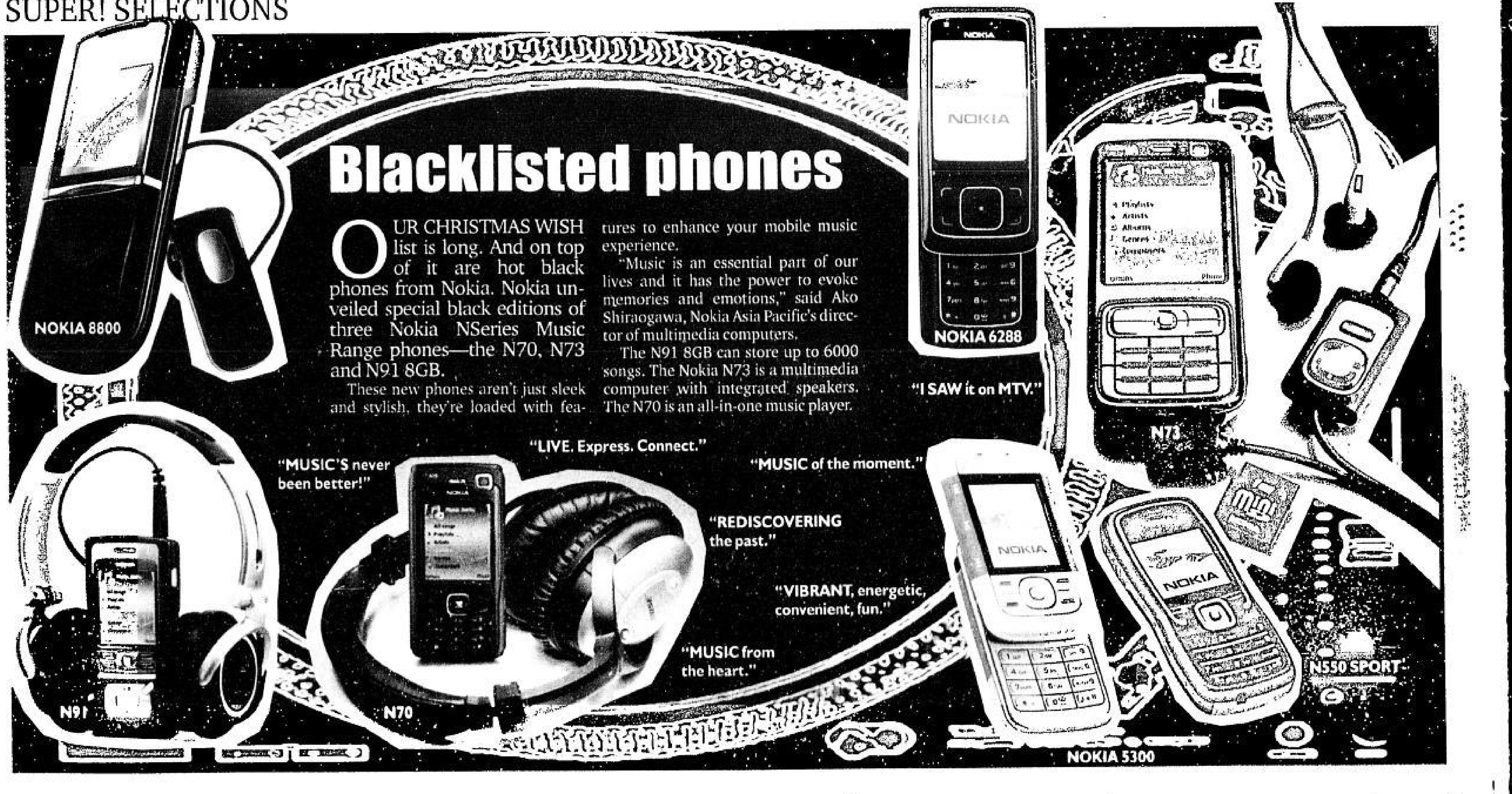
Blacklisted phones

OUR CHRISTMAS WISH list is long. And on top of it are hot black phones from Nokia. Nokia unveiled special black editions of three Nokia NSeries Music Range phones—the N70, N73 and N91 8GB.

These new phones aren't just sleek and stylish, they're loaded with features to enhance your mobile music experience.

"Music is an essential part of our lives and it has the power to evoke memories and emotions," said Ako Shiraogawa, Nokia Asia Pacific's director of multimedia computers.

The N91 8GB can store up to 6000 songs. The Nokia N73 is a multimedia computer with integrated speakers. The N70 is an all-in-one music player.



NOKIA 8800
NOKIA 6288
"I SAW it on MTV."
N73
"MUSIC'S never been better!"
"LIVE. Express. Connect."
"MUSIC of the moment."
"REDISCOVERING the past."
"VIBRANT, energetic, convenient, fun."
"MUSIC from the heart."
N91
N70
N550 SPORT
NOKIA 5300

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ODEL
TESSES.
ca Valerio
Bubbles
araiso

KASHIECA CHIC. Georgina Wilson and her Chanel bag

TWICE THE FUN. Tim Yap and Kerên Pascual

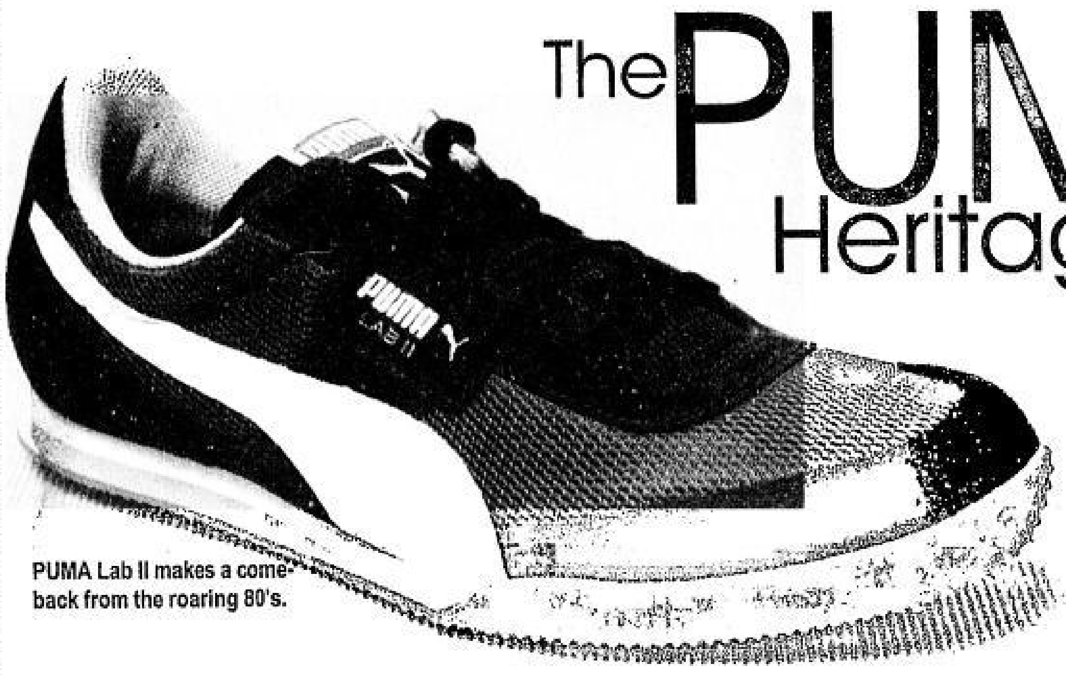
BOY IN BLACK NEXT DOOR. Brent Javier is back

HEADTURNING HONEY. Lisa Rossiter is a sight to behold

EARTH-SHAKING. Miss Earth beauty Priscilla Meirelles

FOUR YOU. Stacy Rodriguez, Helena Belmonte, Janthina Fong and David Milan

The PUMA Heritage Collection


PUMA Lab II makes a comeback from the roaring 80's.

From the Puma Archives for sneaker addicts

Ask a collector why they feel compelled to amass their objects of choice (or desire), and chances are the answer you'll get contains one, some or all of the following words: heritage or history, aesthetic value or beauty, exclusivity or rarity.

Sneaker connoisseurs are no different, and share the same reasons and passions as other collectors. Reasons run the gamut of the following - one, the nostalgia of seeing the same brands and models they have worn when growing up, running around in their backyards. Two, collectors also feel an appreciation of designs that harken back to simpler times when shoe technology was much less complicated. Three, it may also be a form of self-expression, and a way to assert individuality by investing in a unique pair of shoes.

Puma is one footwear brand that manages to capture all these reasons - and shoe savants have taken notice. Established in post-war Germany in 1948, the company with the leaping cat for its logo has consistently come up with distinctive styles over the years. PUMA, and its local distributor, Cougar Athletic Trends, Inc., aims to take a giant leap, and big bite, of the lifestyle market with a range of shoes that are From The Puma Archive. Each model is a reissue of a heritage piece, and is available in limited quantities of 100 pairs. You get more than just a fancy pair of shoes with every purchase - you get a piece of PUMA history.

The Clyde

While New York Knicks basketball player Walt "Clyde" Frazier was an on-court legend on his own right, it was his sense of style off the court that made him more famous. In 1973, his keen fashion sense prompted PUMA to tweak The Suede's design and rename it in his honor. Just like the Suede, the Clyde is also available in limited colorways. As Mr. Frazier, voted as one of the 50 greatest NBA players of all time, once said, "...it's fun to be an individual, to step away from the crowd and leave your own footprint." With PUMA's Clyde, you can now do so.

The Basket City Series

The Basket shares the same heritage as the Clyde and Suede - but differs in having an upper made of smooth leather. The Basket City Series is a commemorative line that honors Paris, New York and London. Each shoe comes in a unique triple color combination, and feature an actual map of the respective city on the footbed. Only a hundred pairs each of the Basket Paris and Big Apple will be available in the Philippines, so if you spot a pair in your size at the stores, you better grab them.

Match

While the Match is now part of PUMA's heritage collection, back in 1974 this tennis shoe was part of the leaping cat's performance range. A rubber outsole gives consistent grip on a variety of playing surfaces, which a combination mesh and leather upper ensures smashing style both on and off the court.

Roma

The Roma was an immensely popular trainer back in the 1960s. This modern-day reproduction remains faithful to the original with its leather upper for a perfect fit, EVA midsole for cushioning and gum-rubber outsole for traction. The signature PUMA formstripe is made of contrasting material such as snakeskin, adding a touch of class to an already classic shoe.

Liga

A favorite of indoor football and futsal players since 1978, the Liga's high-traction gumsole lets you keep up with the fast-paced game. A leather upper gives support, while a suede toecap helps guard against abrasion, and keeps this footballing feline looking fine.

Brasil

The undisputed King of football, Pele is the only player to have won the World Cup trophy thrice - in 1958, 1962 and 1970. Known for dazzling defenders with his fancy footwork on the pitch, the Brasil was his choice of footwear for relaxing off it. If that heritage isn't enough, consider this: 2007 will be the 25th anniversary of this shoe.

Lab II

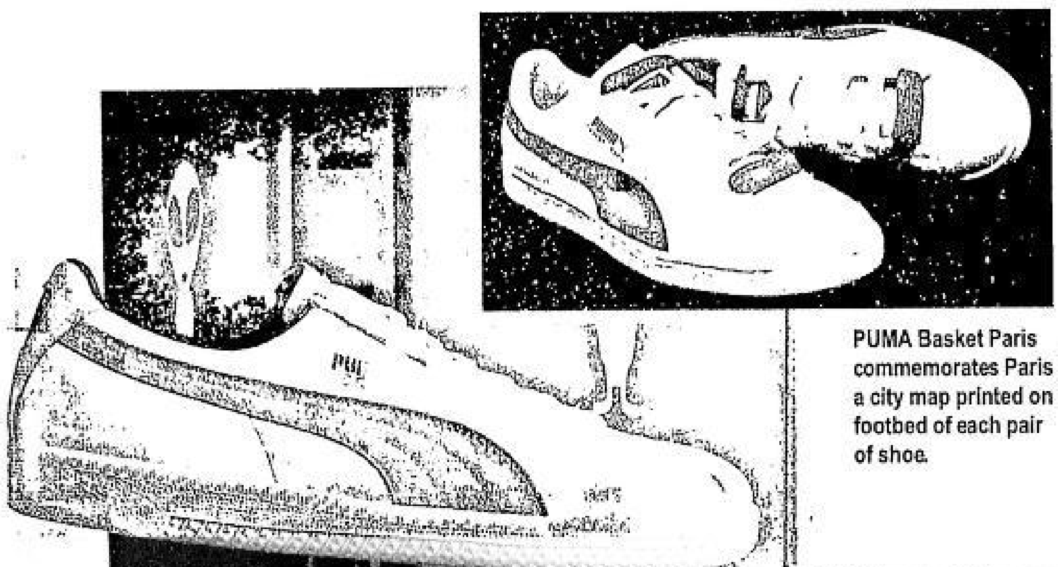
Released in 1981, the Lab II epitomized the "anything goes" attitude of that decade. A nylon mesh and suede leather upper is combined with a two-tone EVA midsole and gum-rubber outsole to give this lightweight trainer a unique look and unmatched fashion versatility. Not bad for a 25-year old design!

So go ahead and indulge. Grab the chance to own a piece of history, in PUMA style.

The PUMA Heritage line is available in select Puma authorized dealers nationwide.

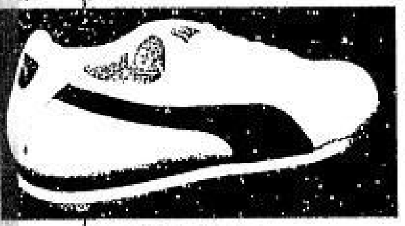
ADVT

The Clyde takes its name from NBA great Walt "Clyde" Frazier's basketball legend in the 70's

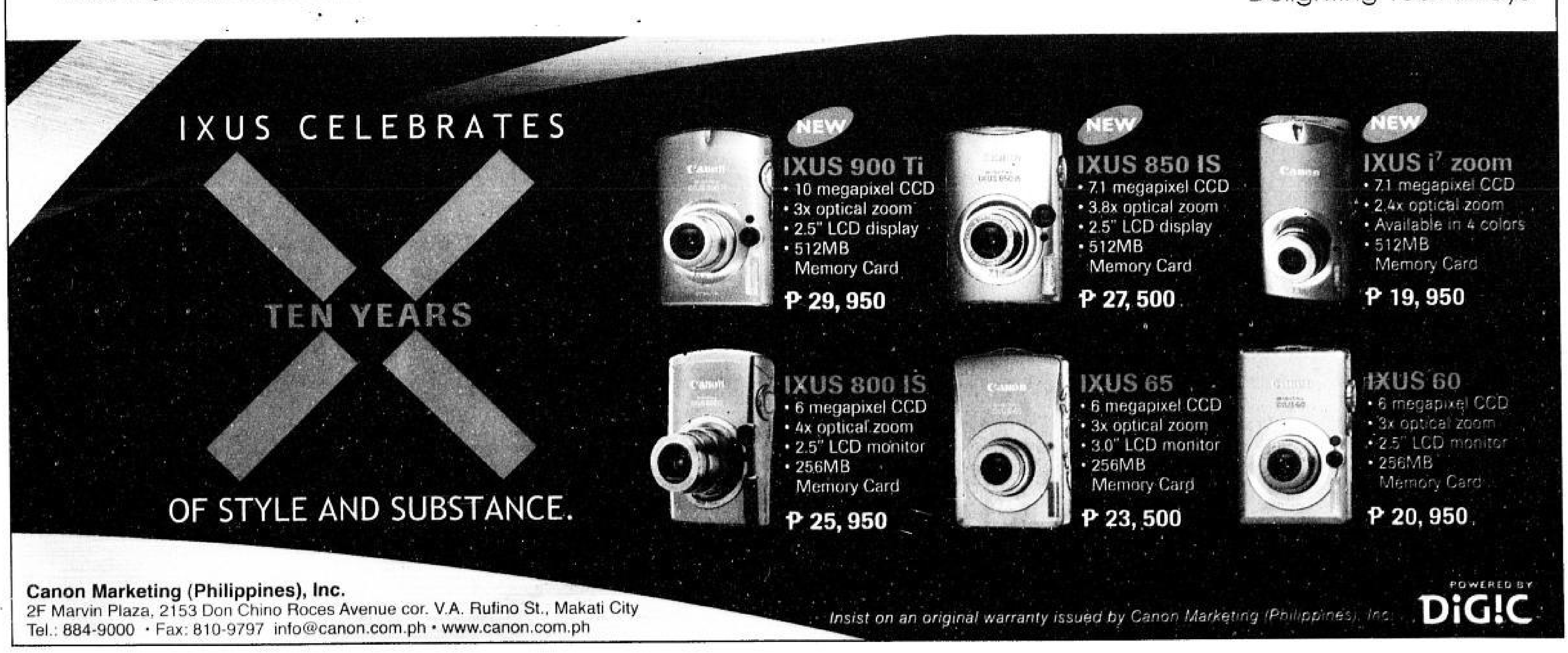

PUMA Basket Paris commemorates Paris with a city map printed on the footbed of each pair of shoe.

Brasil is a tribute to Pele, the greatest footballer of all time, and the country he hails from.

PUMA Liga, first launched in late 1970, traces its roots to indoor football.


Roma was an immensely popular trainer in the 1960s

The PUMA Match was the hot style for playing tennis in the 70's.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NEW
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- 2.4x optical zoom
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- 3x optical zoom
- 3.0" LCD monitor
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IXUS 60
- 6 megapixel CCD
- 3x optical zoom
- 2.5" LCD monitor
- 256MB Memory Card

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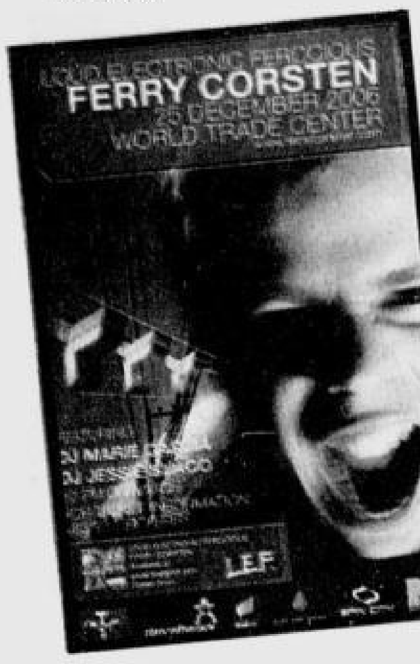

Fifteen questions for Ferry Corsten

From page D1

means I end up getting disturbed from the "production flow." Usually though, I pick it up straight away when I'm back or otherwise I take it with me.

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Destination: Manila

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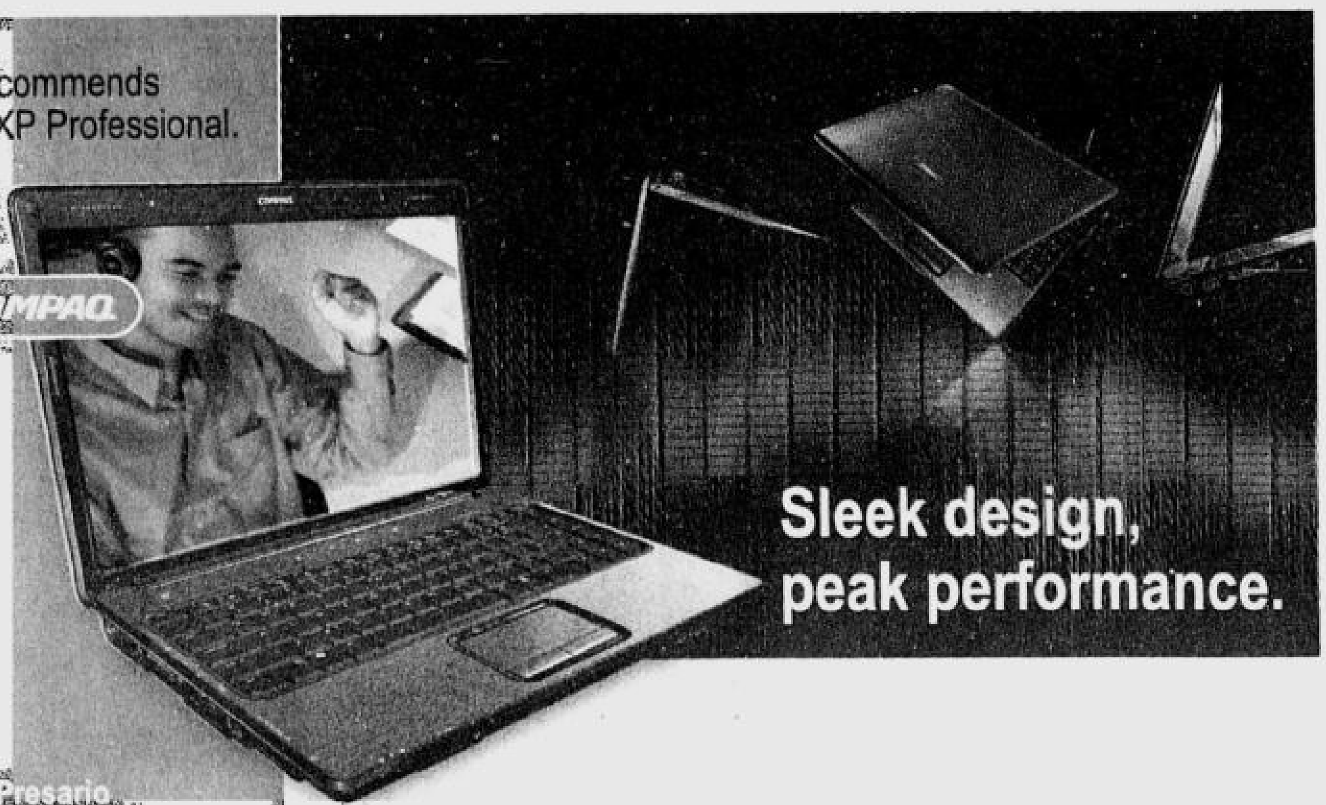

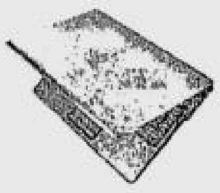
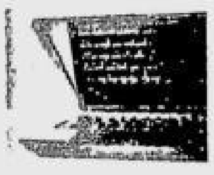

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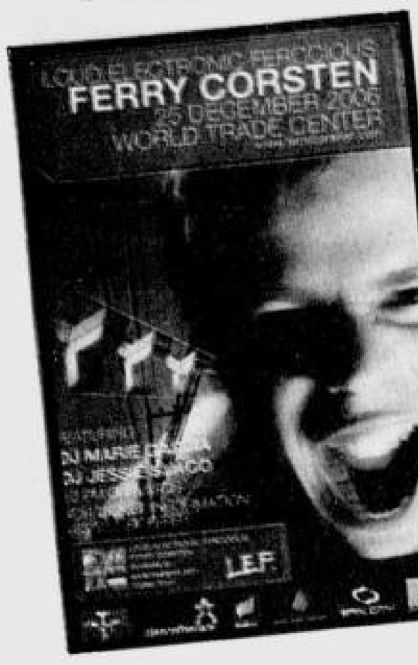

Fifteen questions for Ferry Corsten

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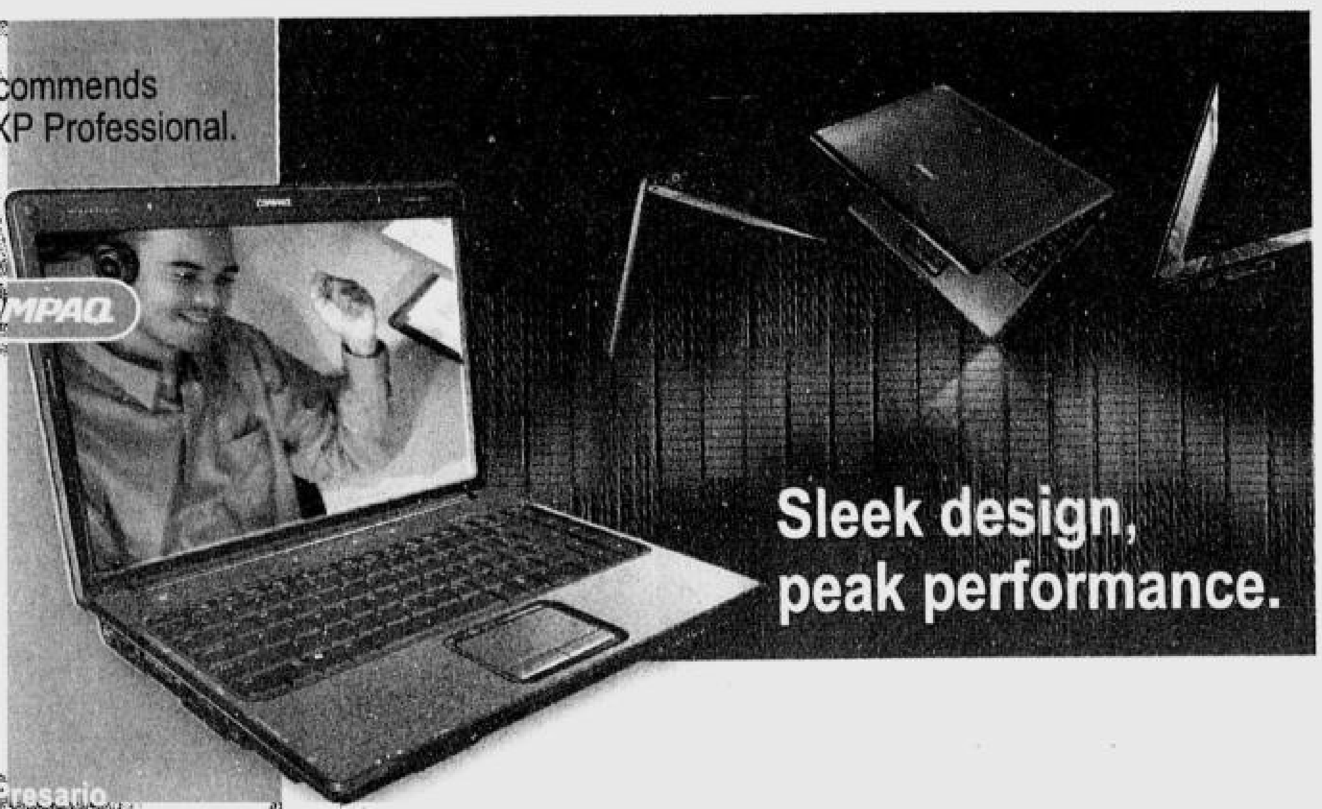

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SUPER! EXCLUSIVE

Norah's arc

By Pam Pastor

She's sold over 40 million albums, she's gone on two world tours and has reaped awards but Norah Jones' vision remains clear. 'My life doesn't revolve around selling records, it revolves around making music'

IT'S 10 A.M. IN MANhattan. Norah Jones, now 27, is sitting in her apartment, trying to finish her bowl of cereal. And a bowl of cereal is the least of what she deserves. After all, her first two albums ("Come Away With Me," which was released by Blue Note in 2002 and "Feels Like Home," released in 2004) have sold over 40 million copies in the United States and around the world and have helped her bag a number of Grammys including "Best Pop Vocal Album," "Album of the Year," "Record of the Year," "Best Female Pop Vocal Performance" and "Best New Artist" in 2003. She also released an album with her band The Little Willies this year, has finished two world tours and has guested in numerous other records and has even appeared in a couple of films.

Norah's love affair with music continues to grow with Not Too Late, her new 13-track album, which is set to be released at the end of January 2007. Norah's bowl of cornflakes got soggy as she told Super! about her passion for making music and her new record, which she considers "more personal."

Songwriting groove

All the songs in Not Too Late were either written or co-written by Norah, a first for the artist who has been known to include a cover or two in her previous records. She says it wasn't planned, that during her last tour, armed with a guitar, "I just got into a songwriting groove that continued when I got back home. I love to interpret other songwriters' music, but I don't always feel as close to them as my own songs. These songs are much more honest, closer to my gut. This record is much more personal."

The record also shows clearly how much Norah has matured as an artist and a musician. Her songs have a wide range of styles but are still undeniably very Norah Jones. "Some of these songs probably have more of my personality because I think they are a little more complex. Some of these songs are dark and cynical but there's also a sense of hope."

Her evolution as an artist isn't the only thing that sets this album apart from the first two. Even the process of making it was different. "It was fun, relaxed and easy." Instead of booking a studio, Norah and her friends worked in her home studio. "There was no pressure, there was no deadline," Norah shared. "Many of the sessions were recorded spur of the moment."

Fun with friends

Aside from Norah's core band which include bassist Lee Alexander (who is also the album's pro-

NORAH'S/ E3

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"Her name was REBECCA.
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I became a True Believer in love At First Sight.
[illegible], I held her clammy hand. I handed
her THE NOTEBOOK that we had once used to write letters
to each other. P.S. I Love You ended each one.
'Consider it as Something Borrowed,' I said.
The car stopped and she started out. 'You're
SIMPLY UNFORGETTABLE' she whispered, as she let go of my hand.
[illegible] later and a A Walk to Remember down
the aisle, she said 'I do' to the man beside me.
Theirs was A WEDDING IN DECEMBER."
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THE AMAZING RACE EXIT INTERVIEWS

Bye bye, Bollywood boys

By Pam Pastor

NO ONE SAW IT COMING. AFTER all, Prashant Raj Sachdev and Sahil Shroff, both 26-year-old models from Mumbai, India, seemed to be among the strongest contenders in the first Amazing Race Asia. They even came in fifth during last week's episode in New Zealand. But because they broke the rules by riding a private car during the race, they were given a one-hour penalty and were eliminated instead of Sharon and Melody who came in last.

We spoke to Sahil on the phone and he told us about the race, his regrets, his plans for the future and his love for Sydney and for the Pinoy teams.

How do you feel about being the third to be eliminated?

It's not a good feeling. I still feel that we did our best. Obviously, ability-wise we did pretty well. We were doing pretty well.

Did you think you were next?

We didn't expect it.

If you could do it all over again, what would you do differently?

First things first, I would try to get to know the show a little more. I've been modeling all over the country and I didn't really have the time to watch it before joining the race. Until two hours before we had to start, I was still at a photo shoot. I probably had just an hour to read the rules. If I could do it again, I would make sure I prepared myself a lot better.

Which part of the race was your favorite?

I enjoyed deep-sea diving with sharks. It was great. The whole experience was unreal.

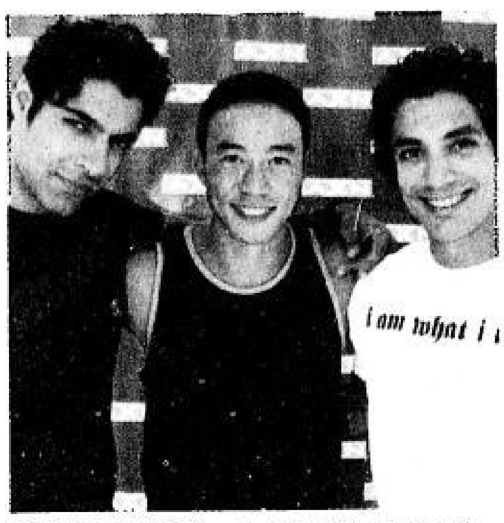
Which was your favorite place?

Sydney was great, it was unreal. I went back for two months straight after the race.

Which was the most difficult part?

The last bit—because we worked really hard. Everyone makes mistakes. It's so hectic and tiring. But that the worst—we were the fifth. We did the tasks really quick. I was okay but Prashant is in shambles.

No one saw it coming. But they broke the rules and the fans of Amazing Race Asia had to say goodbye to Prashant and Sahil



BOMBEI BOYS. Prashant Raj Sachdev and Sahil Shroff with host Allan Wu

Which teams did you bond with?

The Philippine teams. We bonded a lot with Aubrey and Jacq and Ernie and Jeena. We've bonded with them. They're superstars. They're lovely people.

Were you surprised when Ernie and Jeena were the first to be eliminated?

Yes, they're really strong contenders.

Are you planning to visit them in the Philippines?

Yeah, I'm planning to go next year.

Which team are you rooting for now?

I'm going for Sandy and Francesca. They're cool guys and they lived in Australia for a while. We get along with them. They're a great couple and a lot of fun to be with.

Who are you not rooting for?

Andy and Laura. At that point in time I didn't want them to win. When you race, you can be competitive. You go and kick their asses but off the race you take it easy. They weren't like that, they were constantly competitive. But we've gotten to know them better.

How has the race changed your friendship with Prashant?

We pretty much got cooler with each other. We don't have any hang-ups anyway. I'm very busy but when we get time, we catch up where we left off. We understand each other a lot better. I understand his weaknesses a lot more.

What new things did you discover about each other?

In one interview he said that he realized that I never say no to anything. I move fast, chop-chop-chop, and he's more relaxed. He takes a slower approach to things so it's a balance.

What are your plans now?

I'm traveling around again. I've been working working working. I went to Malaysia, I did shows, I opened my clothing store.

What kind of clothes do you sell?

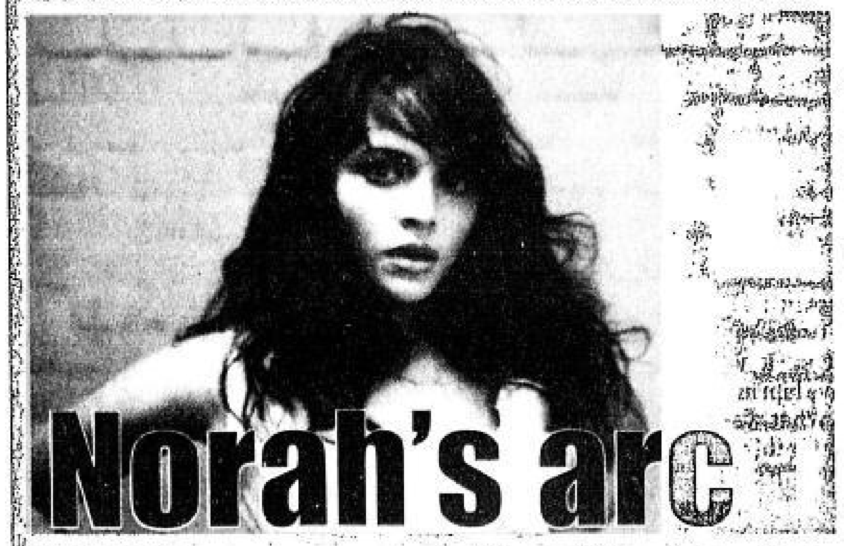
40% men's and 60% women's and I also have home décor.

Are you planning to do more TV work?

I'm doing a lot of ads. I'm very picky with the work I do.

Would you join another reality show?

If it's as good as this one, hell yeah. I do a lot of media work so being in the camera is not a problem.



Norah's arc

From page E1

ducer and who shares songwriting credits with her on a number of tracks), guitarist Adam Levy, vocalist Daru Oda and drummer Andy Borger, the album includes guests like M. Ward and Richard Julian on backing vocals, Jesse Harris on rhythm guitar, Tony Scherr on electric guitar, Larry Goldings on Hammond B-3 organ, Bill McHenry on tenor saxophone and cellists Jeffrey Zeigler of the Kronos Quartet and Julia Kent.

"The album involves friends and people that friends recommended," said Norah. "We were just having some fun."

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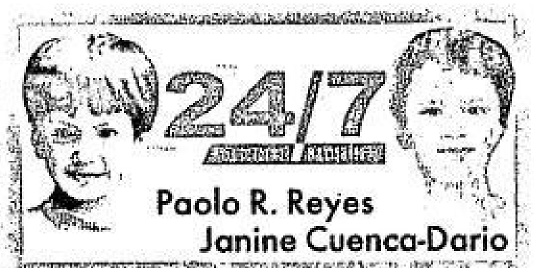

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Brit at Government

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DJ Boyet Almazan at
Wake up Your Seatmat

DANIM Lee and Sanaz Bahrami

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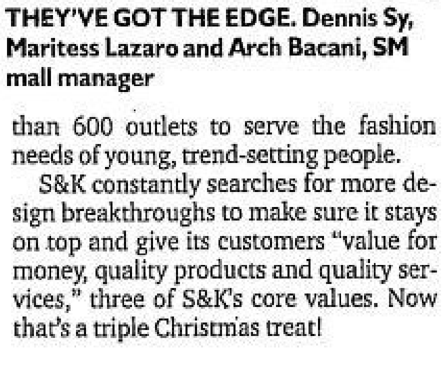

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THE AMAZING RACE EXIT INTERVIEWS

Bye bye, Bollywood boys

By Pam Pastor

No one saw it coming. But they broke the rules and the fans of Amazing Race Asia had to say goodbye to Prashant and Sahil

NO ONE SAW IT COMING. AFTER all, Prashant Raj Sachdev and Sahil Shroff, both 26-year-old models from Mumbai, India, seemed to be among the strongest contenders in the first Amazing Race Asia. They even came in fifth during last week's episode in New Zealand. But because they broke the rules by riding a private car during the race, they were given a one-hour penalty and were eliminated instead of Sharon and Melody who came in last.

We spoke to Sahil on the phone and he told about the race, his regrets, his plans for the future and his love for Sydney and for the Pinoy teams.

How do you feel about being the third to be eliminated?

It's not a good feeling. I still feel that we did our best. Obviously, ability-wise we did pretty well. We were doing pretty well.

Did you think you were next?

We didn't expect it.

If you could do it all over again, what would you do differently?

First things first, I would try to get to know the show a little more. I've been modeling all over the country and I didn't really have the time to watch it before joining the race. Until two hours before we had to start, I was still at photo shoot. I probably had just an hour to read the rules. If I could do it again, I would make sure I prepared myself a lot better.

Which part of the race was your favorite?

I enjoyed deep-sea diving with sharks. It was great. The whole experience was unreal.

Which was your favorite place?

Sydney was great. [illegible] unreal. I went back for two months straight after the race

Which was the most difficult part?

The last bit—because we worked really hard. Everyone makes mistakes. It's so hectic and tiring. But that the worst—we were the fifth. We did the tasks really quick. I was okay but Prashant is in shambles.

BOMBEI BOYS. Prashant Raj Sachdev and Sahil Shroff with host Allan Wu

Which teams did you bond with?

The Philippine teams. We bonded a lot with Aubrey and Jacq and Ernie and Jeena. We've bonded with them. They're superstars. They're lovely people.

Were you surprised when Ernie and Jeena were the first to be eliminated?

Yes, they're really strong contenders.

Are you planning to visit them in the Philippines?

Yeah, I'm planning to go next year.

Which team are you rooting for now?

I'm going for Sandy and Francesca. They're cool guys and they lived in Australia for a while. We get along with them. They're a great couple and a lot of fun to be with.

Who are you not rooting for?

Andy and Laura. At that point in time I didn't want them to win. When you race, you can be competitive. You go and kick their asses but off the race you take it easy. They weren't like that, they were constantly competitive. But we've gotten to know them better.

How has the race changed your friendship with Prashant?

We pretty much got cooler with each other. We don't have any hang-ups anyway. I'm very busy but when we get time, we catch up where we left off. We understand each other a lot better. I understand his weaknesses a lot more.

What new things did you discover about each other?

In one interview he said that he realized that I never say no to anything. I move fast, chop-chop-chop, and he's more relaxed. He takes a slower approach to things so it's a balance.

What are your plans now?

I'm traveling around again. I've been working working working. I went to Malaysia, I did shows. I opened my clothing store.

What kind of clothes do you sell?

40% men's and 60% women's and I also have home décor.

Are you planning to do more TV work?

I'm doing a lot of ads. I'm very picky with the work I do.

Would you join another reality show?

If it's as good as this one, hell yeah. I do a lot of media work so being in the camera is not a problem.

Norah's arc

From page E1

ducer and who shares songwriting credits with her on a number of tracks), guitarist Adam Levy, vocalist Daru Oda and drummer Andy Borger, the album includes guests like M. Ward and Richard Julian on backing vocals, Jesse Harris on rhythm guitar, Tony Scherr on electric guitar, Larry Goldings on Hammond B-3 organ, Bill McHenry on tenor saxophone and cellists Jeffrey Zeigler of the Kronos Quartet and Julia Kent.

"The album involves friends and people that friends recommended," said Norah. "We were just having some fun."

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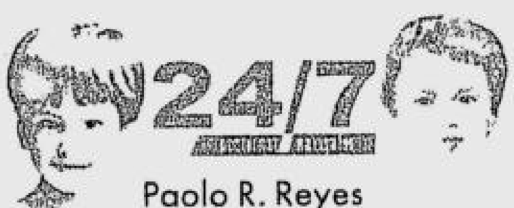

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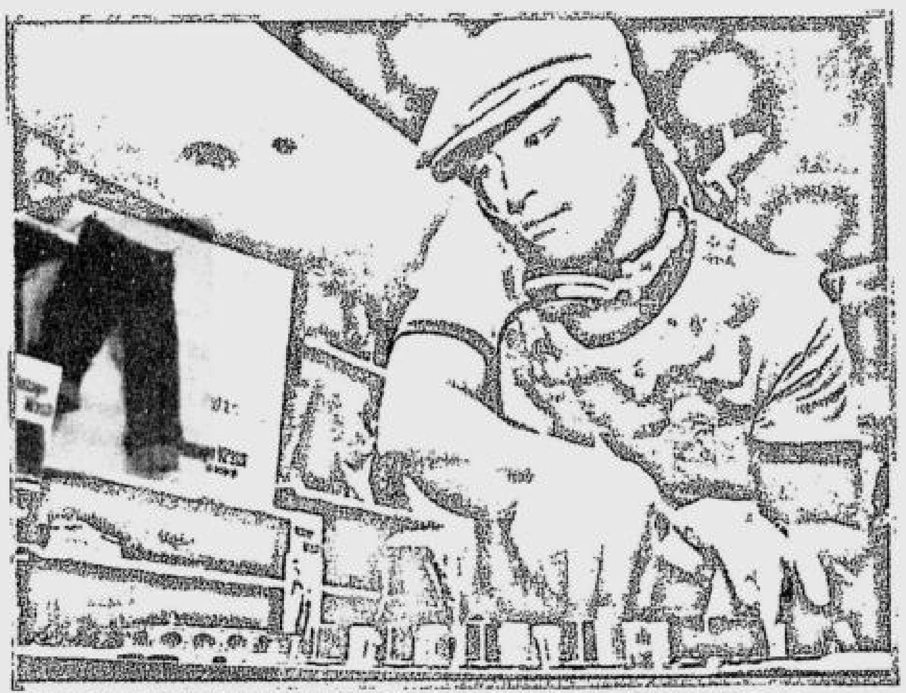
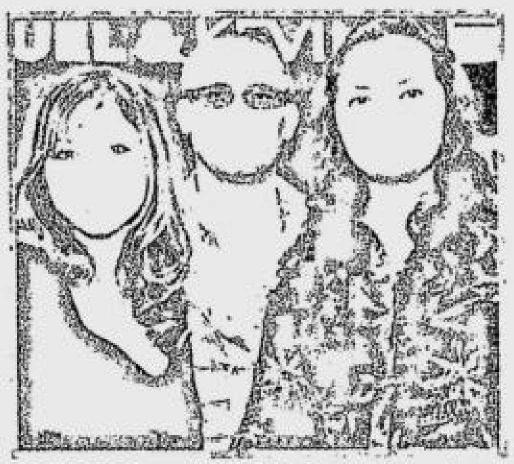


SAMUEL AND KEVIN LAUNCH PRE-PARTY. Music by DJ Mark Nicosia



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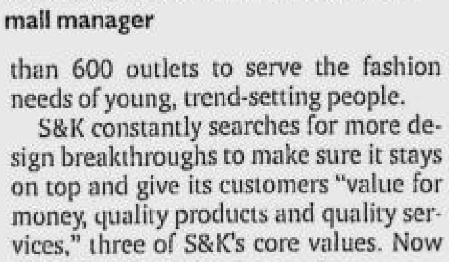

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How did it feel to work on an album without Arif Mardin (a producer of her previous records who passed away in June 2006)?

I miss him as a person and as a riend. It would have been fun to ave him in the studio.

What was it like to play the guiar for this album?

I've been playing a lot of guitar ately. It was more difficult but it was un.

What other musical instruments lo you want to learn?

I wish I could play the Hammond 3-3 organ but it's hard (laughs).

Your sound has matured even nore now. Have you been hearing he same from other people?

I think it has. I hope it has. I have a eeling I'm gonna change a lot. It's so unny, I want to change a lot—just for variety.

Do you still listen to your old records?

Not really (laughs).

Which were your favorite songs rom this album?

I liked "Broken" and "Sinkin' Soon" because it's fun and we did it live.

Is that the song that you recorded in one take?

Yes. It's so funny because it's a long song and we couldn't finish it. Then we went out to dinner, returned to he studio and did it in one take.

Why did you choose Not Too Late as the title track?

A lot of the songs in the record are ynical, they show the dark view of he world. I didn't want to name the ecord Sinkin' Soon (laughs). I chose Not Too Late because it's more optimistic. It reflects my personality.

Wasn't it hard to write while on tour?

When I was writing during the tour, it was therapeutic. It was a way to relax, to detach from having a schedule. There's actually a lot of downtime during the tour. It's busy but we have a lot of downtime.

Was it a conscious decision not to have any remakes in your third album?

Not really. I just started writing more. We did around 18 to 19 songs. At the back of my mind, I guess I knew we'd be using my songs. But we didn't approach it in that way, which I think is good.

What was it like working with Lee Alexander?

We work together really well. He produced the album and he helped me finish writing a lot of the songs.

While working on your album, how do you relax?

I don't really need a lot of breaks because I really enjoy recording.

Was it better working in your home studio than in a studio studio?

I don't know if it's better. But it was definitely more fun. I'd make dinner and have the boys over. It was relaxed.

What do you remember about Manila?

Everyone was really nice. I wish we had more time. We flew in on the day of the show and flew out the next morning. We hardly had time there. But I remember liking the vibe there. It was a really warm place with warm people.

Are you planning another Asian tour?

That would be great.

Not Too Late will be released on Jan. 30 by EMI Music Philippines.

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ikazee, Urbandub, Greyhoundz, Parokya ar, and Valley of y Ayala & Bayang Bar- High at Vida Malate; do Umali at Absinth; ssy MP Room; Ladies at Prince of Jaipur; DJ ar

Fiamma; Mayonnaise, e, Severo, Narda, Hiraya, and Tawo at Saguijo; SPIT at Mag:net Café; DJ Steve Mills at Temple; Thirsty Thirstdays at Bed

Dec. 22, Friday

Up Dharma Down, Pedicab, Musical, Bagetsafonik, Daydream Cycle, Sleepyheads, Death By Tampon and Monsterbot at Saguijo; DJs Marc Naval & Bombi Balquiedra at Fiamma; DJ Mon Maramba at Absinth; DJ Owens Sun at Embassy Club; DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; DJs Darrel & McDash at Temple; DJs Scratchmark & Jenna at Prince of Jaipur

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information and a complete listing of events, text 24/7 GIGS through your mobile phone and send to 2951. Log on to mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 NOCTURNAL NAVIGATOR at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com

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Arthur returnes without his wouldn't be , right? This is also give out at hold four nts who lead a uch as actors, , sports-orient- like. We offer g case to our e understand should highmoment of pasle, says Dr. Vi- add she says hows that we perfect pair of go a long way to even farther

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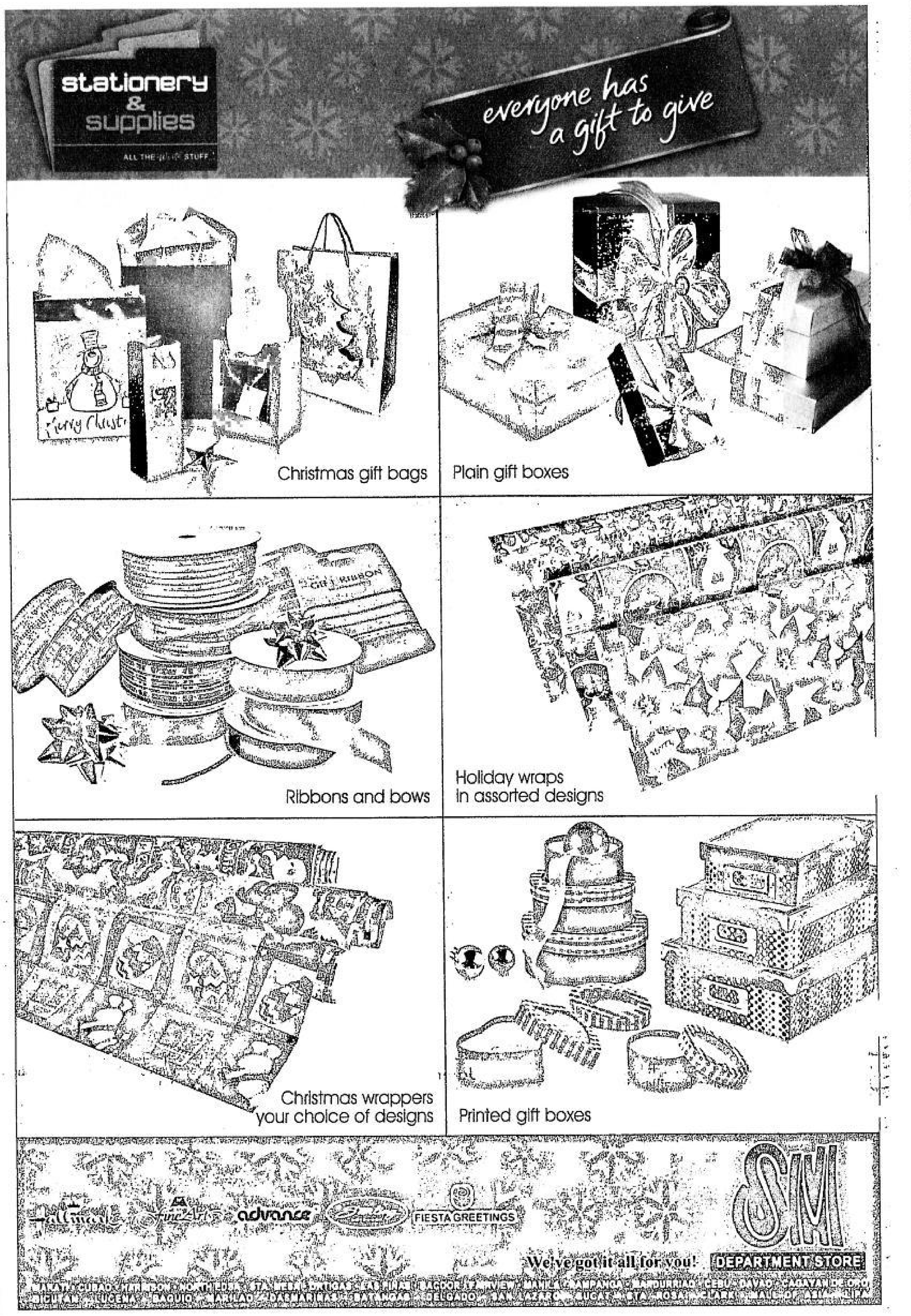
"This is because nothing radiates more than a satisfied customer who has found a good buy and I think that it is what my patient's relatives and friends see when they see their loved one come out of our store."

Inspired to find Your Look? Head to the nearest Vivian Sarabia World of Optics Branch and start finding Your Look!

Dr. Vivian Sarabia owns Vivian Sarabia Optical that caters to eyewear styling and teaching patients about eye wellness. Her Optical Boutiques are currently in SM City, SM Cubao, Galileo SurgiCenter, SM Megamall, SM San Lazaro and SM Mall of Asia. If you have questions about eye styling or want to set an appointment, you can e-mail her at vivsarabia@yahoo.com



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ure, I still know the reality of things. I :now that if I don't sell many albums, t's going to be okay. My life doesn't evolve around selling records, it revolves around making music.

How did it feel to work on an al-um without Arif Mardin (a pro-lucer of her previous records who passed away in June 2006)?

I miss him as a person and as a riend. It would have been fun to iave him in the studio.

What was it like to play the gui-ar for this album?

I've been playing a lot of guitar ately. It was more difficult but it was un.

What other musical instruments lo you want to learn?

I wish I could play the Hammond -3 organ but it's hard (laughs).

Your sound has matured even nore now. Have you been hearing he same from other people?

I think it has. I hope it has. I have a eeling I'm gonna change a lot. It's so unny, I want to change a lot—just for ariety.

Do you still listen to your old ecords?

Not really (laughs).

Which were your favorite songs rom this album?

I liked "Broken" and "Sinkin' Soon" ecause it's fun and we did it live.

Is that the song that you record-d in one take?

Yes. It's so funny because it's a long ong and we couldn't finish it. Then ve went out to dinner, returned to he studio and did it in one take.

Why did you choose Not Too ate as the title track?

A lot of the songs in the record are ynical, they show the dark view of he world. I didn't want to name the ecord Sinkin' Soon (laughs). I chose Not Too Late because it's more optimistic. It reflects my personality.

Wasn't it hard to write while on tour?

When I was writing during the tour, it was therapeutic. It was a way to relax, to detach from having a schedule. There's actually a lot of downtime during the tour. It's busy but we have a lot of downtime.

Was it a conscious decision not to have any remakes in your third album?

Not really. I just started writing more. We did around 18 to 19 songs. At the back of my mind, I guess I knew we'd be using my songs. But we didn't approach it in that way which I think is good.

What was it like working with Lee Alexander?

We work together really well. He produced the album and he helped me finish writing a lot of the songs.

While working on your album, how do you relax?

I don't really need a lot of breaks because I really enjoy recording.

Was it better working in your home studio than in a studio studio?

I don't know if it's better. But it was definitely more fun. I'd make dinner and have the boys over. It was relaxed.

What do you remember about Manila?

Everyone was really nice. I wish we had more time. We flew in on the day of the show and flew out the next morning. We hardly had time there. But I remember liking the vibe there. It was a really warm place with warm people.

Are you planning another Asian tour?

That would be great.

Not Too Late will be released on Jan. 30 by EMI Music Philippines.

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itan Kita w/ Armida on-Reyna and Friends Conspiracy; Cuisine e w/ DJ Manolet at Embassy Cuisine; na at Café Havana

20, Wednesday

kazee, Urbandub, Greyhoundz, Parokya ar, and Valley of Ayala & Bayang Bar- High at Vida Malate; do Umali at Absinth; ssy VIP Room; Ladies Prince of Jaipur; DJ

Fiamma; Mayonnaise, e, Severo, Narda, Hiraya, and Tawo at Saguijo; SPIT at Mag:net Café; DJ Steve Mills at Temple; Thirsty Thirstdays at Bed

Dec. 22, Friday

Up Dharma Down, Pedicab, Musical, Bagetsafonik, Daydream Cycle, Sleepyheads, Death By Tampon and Monsterbot at Saguijo; DJs Marc Naval & Bombi Balquiedra at Fiamma; DJ Mon Maramba at Absinth; DJ Owens Sun at Embassy Club; DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; DJs Darrel & McDash at Temple; DJs Scratchmark & Jenna at Prince of Jaipur

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information and a complete listing of events, text 24/7 GIGS through your mobile phone and send to 2951. Log on to mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 NOCTURNAL NAVIGATOR at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com.

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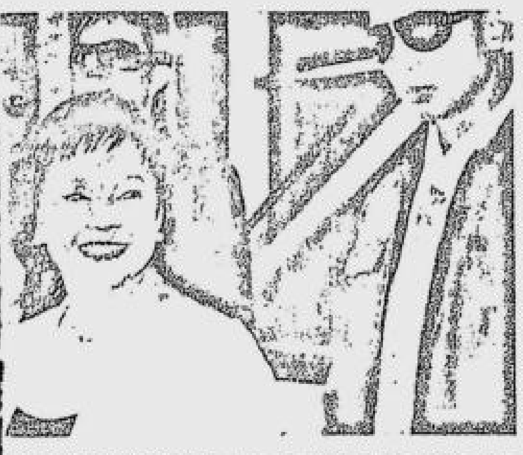


UGH THE EYES. What makes Vivian Sarabia, the eyewear stylist, a star is her attention to detail.

Arthur return-es without his wouldn't be ight? This is also give out it hold four its who lead a ich as actors, sports-orient- like. We offer g case to our e understand should high-ioment of pas-le, says Dr. Vi-add she says hows that we erfect pair of o a long way o even farther

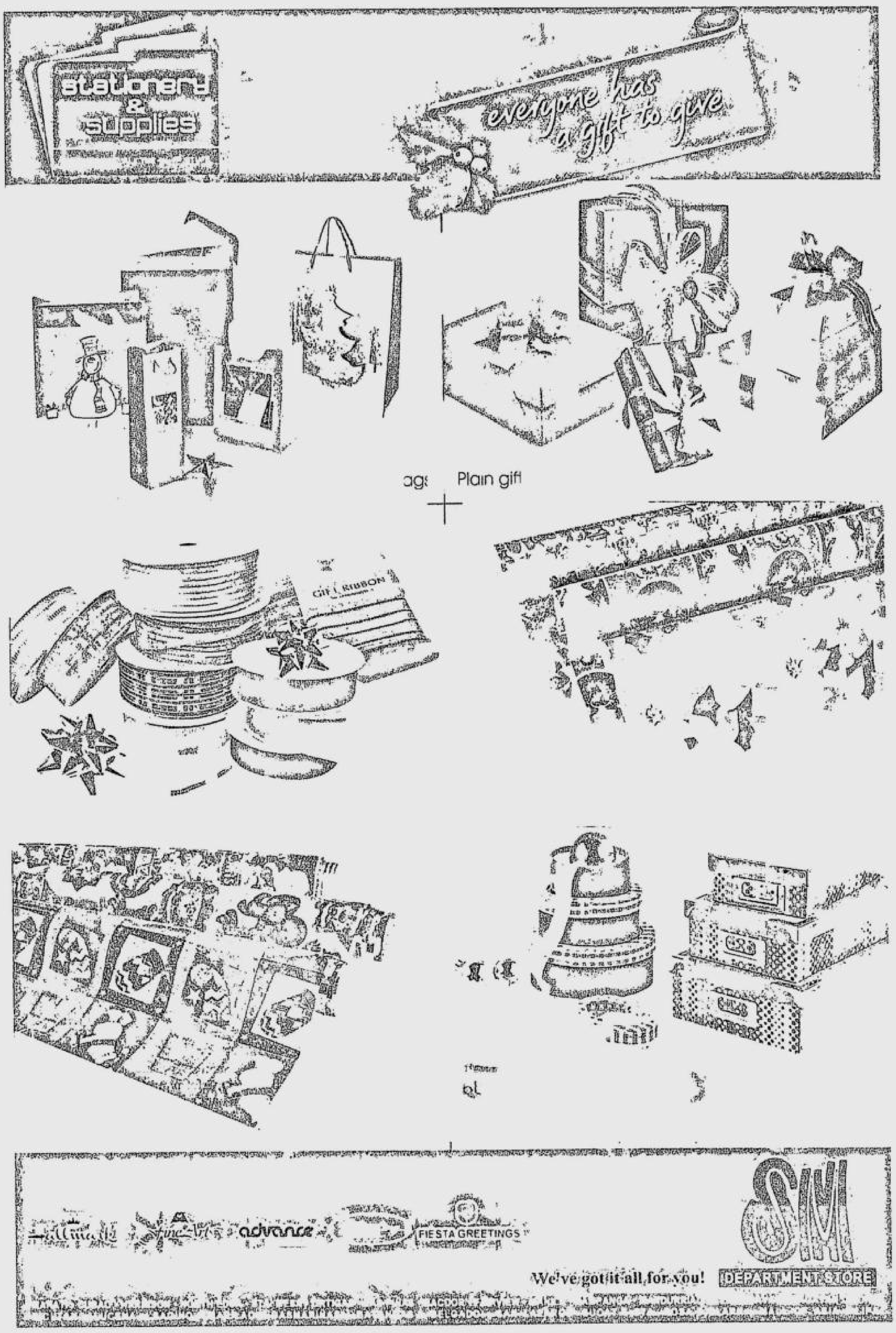
ight frame

d, Dr. Vivian ds of wisdom hoosing the ntely depends don't force styles on my patients," says Dr. Sarabia, "but I rather like to believe that I help them with a pair that they are comfortable with and proud to wear."

"This is because nothing radiates more than a satisfied customer who has found a good buy and I think that it is what my patient's relatives and friends see when they see their loved one come out of our store."

Inspired to find Your Look? Head to the nearest Vivian Sarabia World of Optics Branch and start finding Your Look!

Dr. Vivian Sarabia owns Vivian Sarabia Optical that caters to eyewear styling and teaching patients about eye wellness. Her Optical Boutiques are currently in SM City, SM Cubao, Galileo SurgiCenter, SM Megamall, SM San Lazaro and SM Mall of Asia. If you have questions about eye styling or want to set an appointment, you can e-mail her at vivsarabia@yahoo.com



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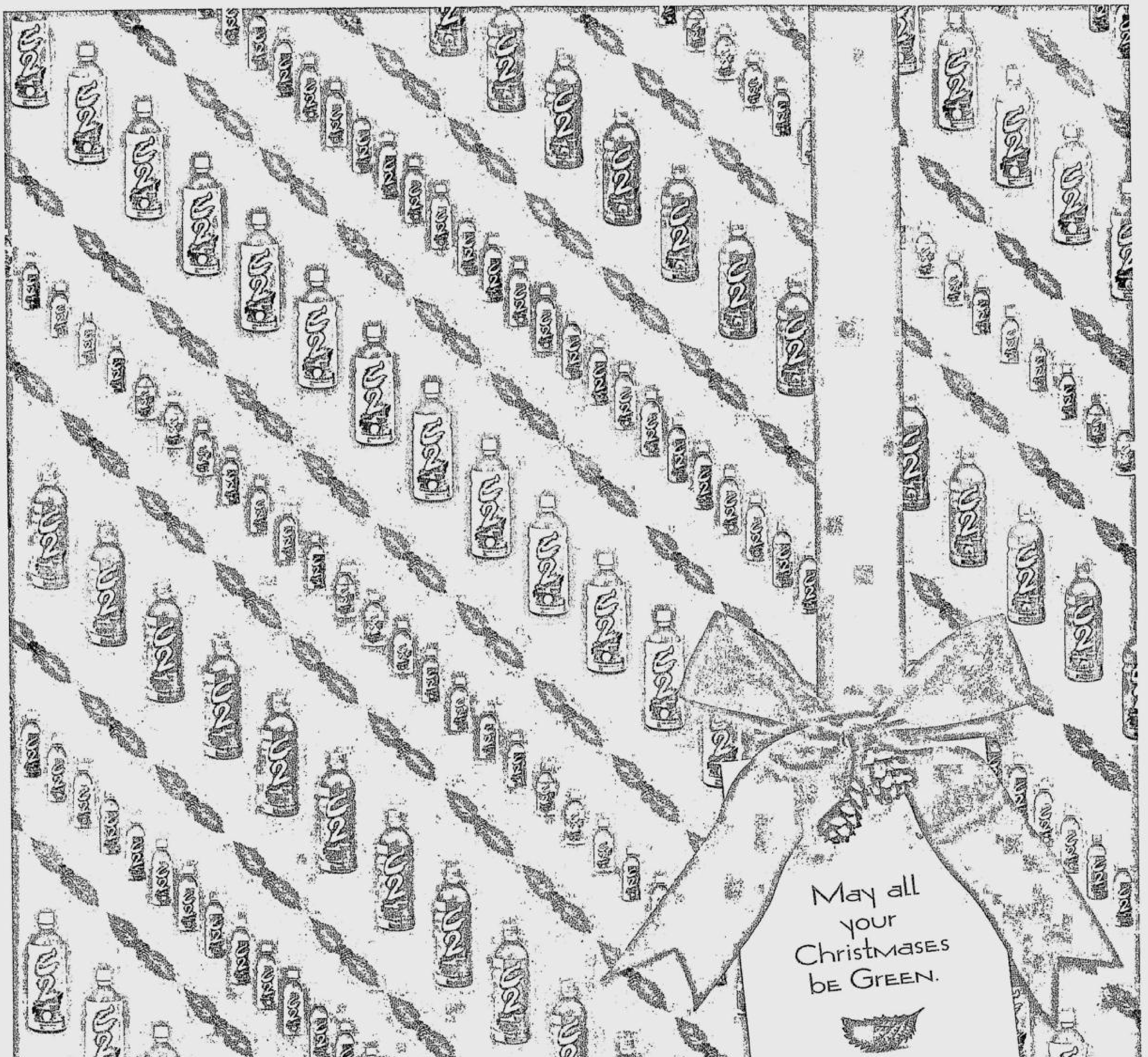
May all your Christmases be Green.

E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph

SATURDAY *Special*

Editor **Nestor U. Torre** • *Assistant Editor* **Rito P. Asilo**
Text us your feedback: inquirer sat name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

erik santos
your love

SANTOS. Considerable improvement.

Sheryn Regis
THE MODERN JUKEBOX COLLECTION

REGIS. Welcome addition to surfeit of revivals.

Sheryn and Erik evince growth in latest albums

By Rito P. Asilo

WE GREW UP LISTENING TO the sappy jukebox hits of Victor Wood, Eddie Peregrina, Didith Reyes, Imelda Papin, Claire dela Fuente and Eva Eugenio.

Of course, there were bigger stars in the '70s and '80s, but these names lorded over everybody else in that coin-operated musical machine.

When we purchased our copy of Sheryn Regis' latest album, "The Modern Jukebox Collection," we were intrigued by the concept.

Accessible

To those young enough to know what a jukebox is, it was a contraption that made songs accessible to people who couldn't buy machines for recording formats that were available at the time: Vinyls, eight-tracks or cassettes. (There weren't I-Pods and CD players then.)

All you had to do was drop a coin and choose from a playlist and—voila—you'd automatically hear your favorite songs. Technology has since made the jukebox almost obsolete, however.

Unrequited love

Happily, Sheryn's songs about mostly unrequited love are a welcome addition to the current surfeit of OPM covers and revivals.

The collection boasts of five remakes, six originals and minus-ones. The remakes include Leah Navarro's "Ang Pag Ibig Kong Ito", Joey Albert's "I Remember the Boy", Vina Morales' "Alam Mo Ba," and a requisite belting track, Linda Eder's "After All."

Our picks: Manilyn Reynes' "Sayang na Sayang," one of the last decade's most popular songs; the Aegis-styled "Ang Pag Ibig Kong Ito," and Larry Hermoso's "Bakit Iniwan Mo?," whose

SHERYN/ F3

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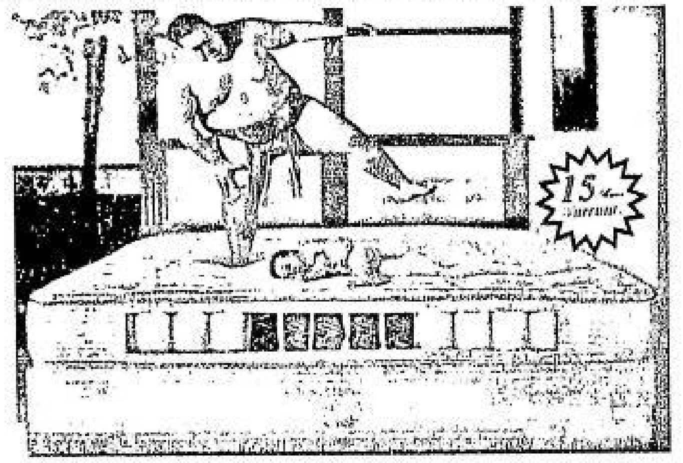

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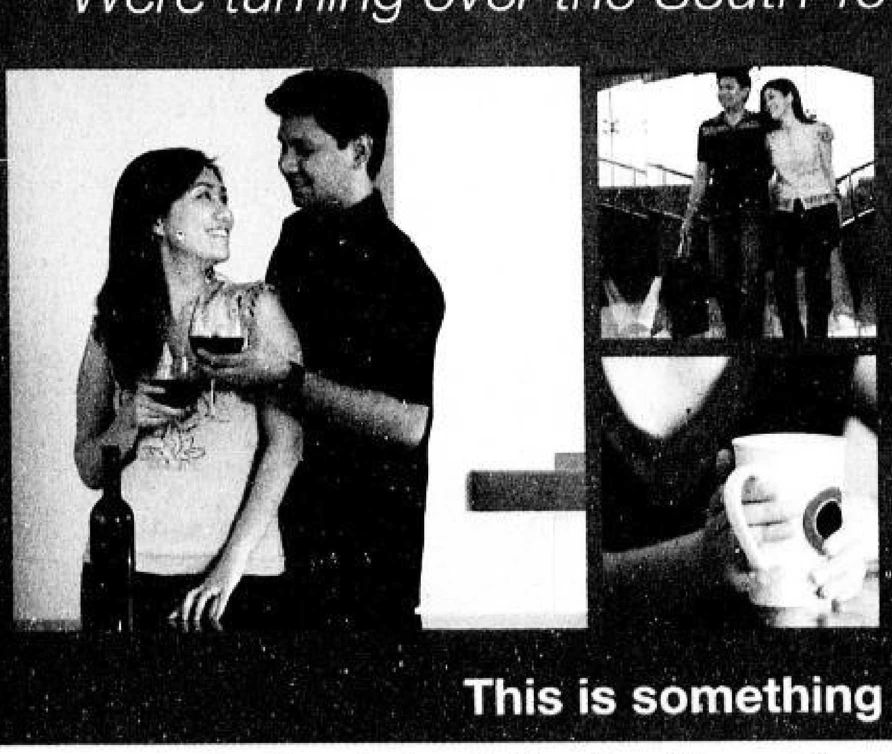
Lee Gardens Turnover Weekend
December 16-17, 2006

Were turning over the South Tower of Lee Gardens to its new owners!



Come join us for a festive line-up of activities:

- Turnover ceremonies for the new owners
- Interior design consultations
- **Special Home & Gifts Bazaar** *(Sat & Sun; 10am-8pm)* Participation of handpicked retailers of home furnishings, personal care items, accessories, clothes, toys and food
- Hourly raffle prizes for lucky visitors
- Starbucks coffee treats from the Chill Patrol Van and the Mercury Man
- Christmas Carols at 6pm daily
- Tour of actual units in Lee Gardens for interested visitors

This is something you definitely cannot miss!

**Lee Gardens is located on Lee St. cor. Shaw Blvd., across Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.
For more details, call 7183570 or 0917-6388888.**

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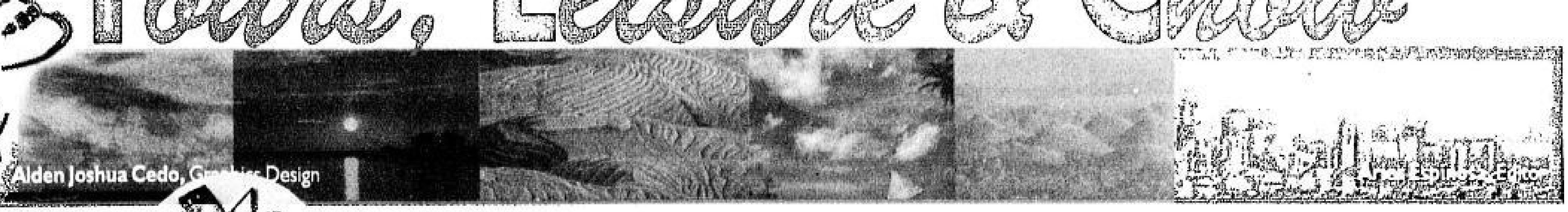
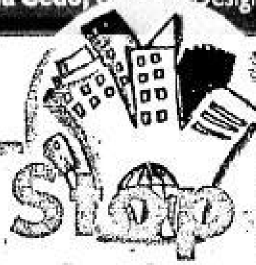


Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design
[illegible] Espinosa, Editor



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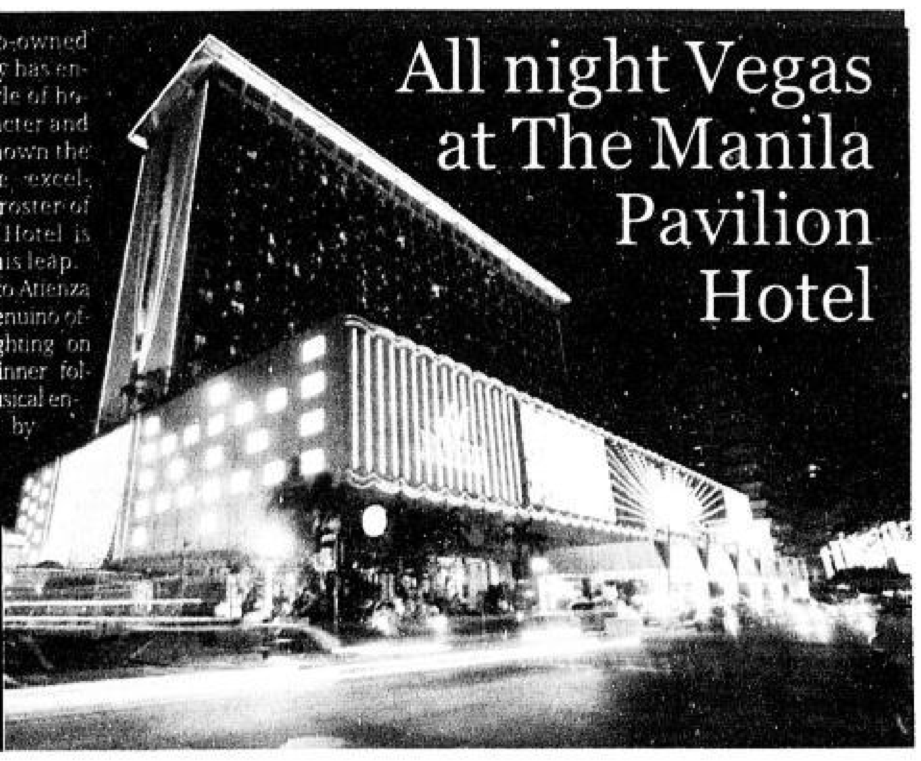
Retro Countdown Party at The Bellevue

SAY HELLO TO THE NEW YEAR WITH A BIG bang and go on an all night retro dancing with The Bellevue's Retro Countdown Party with The Bloomfields. On Dec. 31, let this group of charming young musicians take you back to the swinging sixties as you partake of an especially prepared 4-course gourmet meal. Tickets are P1,500 inclusive of 4-course set dinner and 1 standard drink or P1,200 inclusive of one standard drink. Table rates good for 12 persons are at P15,000 inclusive of 4-course set dinner and 1 round standard drink per person plus 1 bottle of wine or P12,000 for 1 round standard drink per person plus 1 bottle of wine. End the year right by partying with The Bloomfields at The Bellevue!

Yuletide Barbecue. Experience summer in December as the dining Mecca of southern Metro Manila, The Bellevue Hotel, heats up dinner tables with its Yuletide Barbecue promo. All Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays of December serves up a variety of favorite barbecued dishes during the dinner buffet. Heat up those December weekend nights, only at The Bellevue.

Buffet Holiday. Spend the holidays at Alabang's ultimate family destination and indulge in the spirit of Christmas. Share the warmth of the holiday with friends and family on Dec. 24, 25, 31 and January 1 at The Bellevue Hotel's Café D' Asie Restaurant and partake of Christmas dinner favourites. Available for lunch and dinner at the Bellevue's Café d' Asie Restaurant. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

All night Vegas at The Manila Pavilion Hotel



MANILA PAVILION HOTEL AND Casino Filipino Pavilion fascinate leisure travelers, businessmen, and high stake-rollers with its brand new look. Cladded in its most flamboyant and visually arresting lighting effects, the corner street of Maria Orosa and United Nations suddenly becomes a walk in Las Vegas.

The entire hotel façade is adorned with a state-of-the-art lighting fixture called LED lights. LED or light emitting diode is an advanced luminating device that produces a colorful spectrum of light. Since colors created rely on the condition and composition of the semi-conducting material used, a highly - sophisticated LED is capable of producing a burst of light in various hue and shades. This type of LED is the very same one used in the hotel's façade.

Waterfront Hotels and Casinos, the largest Filipino-owned hotel chain in the country has envisioned an ala Vegas style of hotel, exciting, full of character and grandiose that will be known the world over for service excellence. Among its proud roster of hotels, Manila Pavilion Hotel is merely the first to take this leap.

The honorable Mayor Lito Atienza and Pagcor Chair, Efraim Genuino officiated the ceremonial lighting on Dec. 13. Cocktails and dinner followed at Boulvar, where musical entertainment was provided by one of the country's premier local band, Major Impact.

Manila Pavilion Hotel is now part of Waterfront Philippines Inc, the largest Filipino hotel chain in the country. It is located along United Nations Avenue corner Maria Orosa Street, Manila.

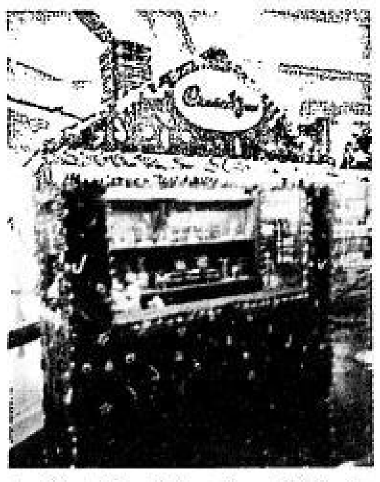
YULETIDE CHEERS AT THE MALAYAN PLAZA
Spend a joyful holiday season with friends and loved ones at The Malayan Plaza. For a minimum of two (2) nights per stay, get the 3rd night free for only P9,600. Accommodations are for a One Bedroom De Luxe Suite. Package is inclusive of buffet breakfast for two (2) persons, welcome wine and chips, bottled water, local newspaper and free use of the Hotel's facilities. Experience modern lifestyle living at The Malayan Plaza, located at ADB Avenue cor. Opal Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. For inquiries and reservations, please call (632) 706-0055 or visit the website at www.quantumsuites.com

Dusit Hotel's 'Chocolate House' - a must see

YOUR VISIT TO DUSIT HOTEL Nikko this December will never be complete without passing by the Hotel's 'Chocolate House' located near the Deli Shop.

The edible 'Chocolate House' is made of rye bread coated with chocolate and decorated with assorted cookies and chocolate candies. It took 15 kilos of chocolate and 2 sacks of flour in making this grand 'Chocolate House.'

One can immediately smell the enticing scent of chocolate upon entering the hotel lobby. Guests will find assorted pralines, mini chocolate house, mini gingerbread house and other Deli items for sale inside the Chocolate House. Also available for sale at the Deli Shop are the Holiday Hampers, cakes, wines, breads and many other treats in line with the Hotel's celebration of "Christmas for the Young and Young at Heart"



Dusit Hotel Nikko is located at Edsa corner Pasay Road, Ayala Center, Makati. For inquiries, please call 867-3333.

People, Events & Products

ATLAS COPCO REACHES THE IMPOVERISHED
Atlas Copco (Philippines) Inc is a steadfast advocate and practitioner of social responsibility projects. The company extends its financial assistance for the impoverished community to alleviate them from poverty. Knowing shelter as one of the basic needs of the people, Atlas Copco is currently on the course of providing habitat for the victims of the mudslide incident in Barangay Guinsaugon, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte. In collaboration with SEIPI (Semi-conductors and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc) being under the arm of Habitat for Humanity, Atlas Copco contributed three houses for the mudslide victims to give the latter decent homes that will help them start a new life. Visit Atlas Copco at: www.atlascopco.com We are committed to your superior productivity through interaction and innovation. Photo shows Jonnie F. Regis (left with paint roller), general manager of Atlas Copco (Philippines), Inc who willingly facilitates in painting the houses.

Complete from A to Zinc: For a healthy body

THE WORLD HAS BECOME MORE dynamic and fast-paced because of all the developments that have emerged. Thus, most of us confront challenging responsibilities that must be effectively completed. To enable us to accomplish all these things, we need to perform properly. And to perform properly, we must acquire the needed amount of vitamins and essential nutrients.

Centrum is packed with vitamins and nutrients from A to Zinc, taking a dose of it daily ensures that the body is kept healthy and protected. We can be energetic enough to confront life's daily challenges because Centrum gives us sufficient amount of Vitamin A, B1 (Thiamine), B2 (Riboflavin), B12 (Cyanobalamin) that aids in proper functioning of the nervous system. It also aids in keeping our bones healthy to keep us going with its Vitamin D content.

Along with the vitamin contents of Centrum, it also comes with a wide range of minerals and nutrients essential to our body. These minerals and nutrients aid in the formation of substances necessary for growth, development, and proper body functioning. They also help in protecting us from acquiring all sorts of diseases

Centrum, the number one brand of multi-vitamin in the world ensures sufficient dose of 30 vitamins and minerals in every tablet thus ensuring healthy and protected body. Take Centrum everyday and feel complete.

Centrum is available in all leading drug stores.

Not much sheen in Jet's sophomore effort

By Noelani Torre

TYPE IN "JET SHINE ON" IN YOUR Google search bar, click on the second link, and click on the play button of the YouTube video that will appear—but *only* if you're not squeamish.

For a certain respected website specializing in music criticism, this video of an ape drinking his own pee straight from the source is what they think of Aussie band, Jet's sophomore effort, "Shine On."

Quintet

To be fair to the rock-and-rolling quintet from Down Under, you will not feel compelled to drink your own pee after listening to their album.

For that matter, listening to it can' t be as bad as being a monkey who apparently has no water bowl, or even just looking at the said monkey. The truth is that this is an okay sounding recording.

Unfortunately, the material is hardly distinguishable from those in their debut—they sound too much like Oasis, and when they don't sound like Oasis, they sound like AC/DC-meets-the-Beatles. In other words, Jet's latest collection is as far from original as you can get.

Traditional

They got away with it in their first album because people paid attention to the fact that the group was reviving traditional rock—and they were not being ironic about it: They were dead serious, they had chutzpah, were unselfconsciously loud—*and* they sounded good! They even had a hit ("Are You Gonna Be My Girl?"), and so they became stars.

Rock and roll

There's nothing wrong with reviving the sound of good, old, scream-to-the-rafters rock and roll. It remains the kind of music that will have you on your feet and punching holes in the air.

There's also nothing wrong with being influenced by other artists. But, if you don't want to sound like a jumped-up tribute band, you'll have to put a lot of heart and effort into your music and performances. This is what the guys don't do in their latest record.

By the time the semi-decent track, "That's All Lies," makes an

NOT MUCH/ I4

JET. The chutzpah has fizzled.

Sheryn and Erik...

From page F1

melody will remind you of Jolina Magdangal's innocuous "Dahil Mahal na Mahal Kita." The track's power builds up as it smolders from the sentimental intro to its earnestly sung chorus—a guilty aural pleasure for people who love sentimental tunes.

Like most of Vehnee Saturno's hits, "Di Na Babalik Pa" has a refreshing but familiar melody. In the rock-tinged "Ang Pag Ibig Kong Ito," Regis falters when she loses the last notes as she dips down into "*Ngunit ayokong may makakita,*" and then again, when she sings, "*Yan ay ayokong kanyang malaman.*" But, she recovers in time for its conclusion: "*Sana'y kapalaran ko ay magbago.*"

Repetitive

She also goes to town in the self-penned "Pusong Lito," but the lyrics are trite, repetitive and unoriginal. What is missing in this album is her delightful version of Hotdog's "Bongga Ka, Day," which deserves its rightful place in any jukebox. Regis has a beautiful voice, but it lacks a distinct quality.

There's no doubt about it: The petite vocal dynamo has steely pipes. But, listening to the same histrionic singing style all the time can be boring. So, her somber version of "I Remember the Boy" is a breath of fresh air in a lineup that showcases lung power more than emotive ability.

For his part, MYX Music Awards' recent best male artist awardee, Erik Santos, shows considerable growth as a singer in his fourth solo album, "Your Love, " where he pays tribute to popular band hits from the 90s.(He beat Regis in that contentious singing competition a few years ago, remember?) This time, Erik displays impeccable taste in his musicality—a trait that was already evident in his last CD outing, "Loving You Now."

Romantic ballads

In the 12-track collection, he breathes new life into pop-rock hits and turns them into beautifully-sung romantic ballads: From "Your Love" and "Running Away" to "Next in Line" and "Say You'll Never Go."

In "Parting Time," his duet with Kyla, he displays full control of his voice. He gives a foot-stomping performance and grooves to "Huwag Na Lang Kaya." His version of Afterimage's "Next in Line" lacks the sense of urgency needed by its lyrics, however.

But, Neocolours's "Say You'll Never Go" perfectly suits his voice quality: Raspy, full-bodied and confident, from the low registers to the soaring high notes. Erik is best heard when he sings softly and leisurely. (He was in top vocal shape when he covered Hotdog's "Bitin sa 'Yo," recently) He further demonstrates singing panache here. Our top picks: "Misty Glass Window," "Kisap Mata" and his soulful version of "Maging Sino Ka Man."

Technique

Erik may have started on the wrong foot by beating somebody who was more vocally equipped than he was. But, the guy has grown considerably as a singer—in terms of style, technique and discipline.

He has realized that being a champion doesn't require him to shout his songs all the time: Music that comes from the heart will always be better than that sung through pure chest power.

REGIS. Lung power over emotive ability.

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Not much sheen...

From page F3

appearance, you're starting to feel bored—and it's not even halfway down the playlist yet!

"Stand Up" and "Rip It Up" inject a bit of vitality into things, but it doesn't last long.

Jet sounds lackluster for the most part—as if they weren't completely there. And because you're not being entertained by the music, you tend to latch on to the lyrics—which, as it turns out, are even worse.

Second track

For example, take this line from the second track, "Holiday": "Paperweight, baby, that's my name/ You can't relate 'cause you're all the same."

Despite all this, though, you can't help thinking that there *must* be a *real* band under all that copying and posturing.

If there is, they have to emerge soon because listening to same old things can be real tiresome.

JET. Lackluster sophomore effort.

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SATURDAY *Special*

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Ensemble comedy brings sparks of cinematic sunlight to the big screen

By Rito P. Asilo

"Little Miss Sunshine"
D: Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris
S: Abigail Breslin, Greg Kinnear, Toni Collette, Steve Carell

"LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE." Catharsis through laughter and tears.

HERE'S A SMALL movie with a big heart: Seven-year-old Olive Hoover (Abigail Breslin) finally gets a shot at fulfilling her ultimate dream—to compete in the Little Miss Sunshine national beauty pageant—after the winner from New Mexico forfeits her title and little Ms. Hoover, who was declared second best in her state, has to take over.

Olive, plain-looking, full-bodied and brainy, has been waiting for this once-in-a-lifetime chance to show off the talent that she's been practicing on her own—a show-stopping dance routine that her heroin-sniffing, ne'er-do-well grandfather, Edwin (Alan Arkin), has enthusiastically taught her.

So, her dad, Richard (Greg Kinnear), hauls off the whole family in their dilapidated VW minibus to take the 800-mile cross-country road trip to sunny California for the finals of the beauty contest.

Olive's harried, chain-smoking mom, Sheryl (Toni Collette), forces her Nietzsche-loving, 15-year-old brother, Dwayne (Paul Dano), to take the trip with them. (He has taken a vow of silence—and hasn't uttered a single word in nine months—until he's able to emancipate himself from the family he professes to hate by attending Air Force school to train as a pilot.)

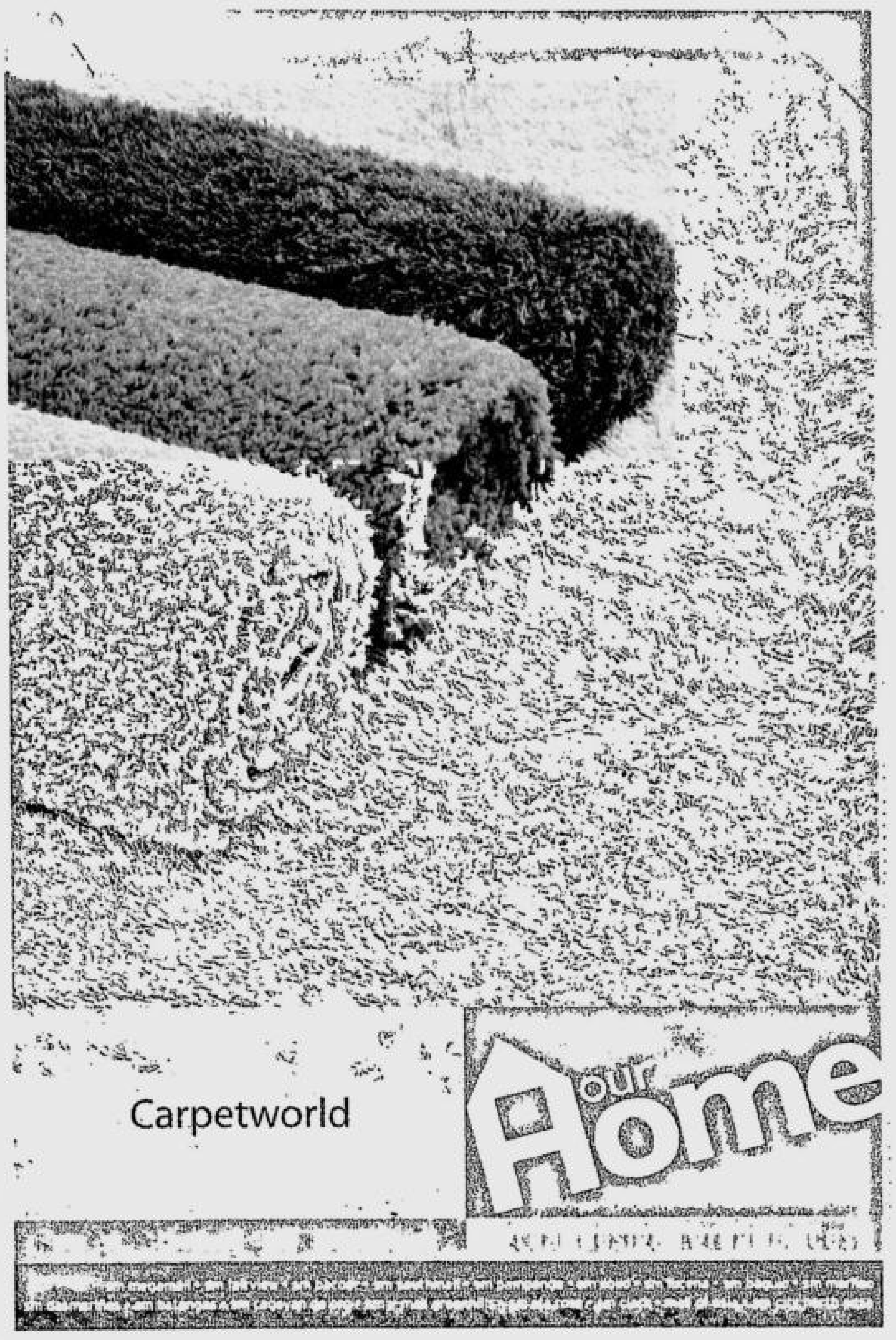
Completing the quirky bunch is gay uncle, Frank Greenberg (Steve Carell, in the role of a lifetime), a renowned Proust scholar who's under the care of Sheryl, following a botched suicide attempt after suffering the ignominy of getting fired from work—and a doomed love affair with a graduate-school student (who commences an affair with his fiercest rival in the academe).

On paper, the premise sounds like fodder for a *telenovela*, but directors Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris fully realize their film's narrative potential, and weave a bittersweet, farcical tale about a dysfunctional family who thrives on one another's strengths and frailties.

The production is short on subtlety, but long on warmth and sincerity. It likewise examines our attraction to and fascination for beauty contests

While some scenes challenge viewers' suspension of disbelief (particularly

ENSEMBLE/ G2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Action starrer with a timely message

THE ROCK. Tough on the outside, warm and caring on the inside.

By Noelani Torre

HAS THE ROCK ever been in a good movie? Surprisingly, this is a question that's hard to answer. Certainly, we know that the former WWE champ has starred in a few films, but their relative goodness or badness doesn't seem to affect him. The Rock stands apart from all that.

Juvenile detention

It is his presence, however, that helps make his latest starrer, "Gridiron Gang," a more enjoyable watch. In this based-on-true-events production, Dwayne "The 'Rock" Johnson plays Coach Sean Porter, a juvenile detention camp probation officer and former college football star.

Sense of purpose

Frustrated by the institution's high failure rate—75 percent of the boys who go out end up in jail again, or die—he decides that they need something else that would teach them discipline and a sense of purpose.

With the help of another officer, Malcolm Moore (rapper Xzibit), they form a football team—that has to be ready in four weeks for a game against a virtually undefeated local high school team!

You know what happens next: The resistance from the skeptical authorities; hostile men gradually becoming friends with one another; the boys' first game turning into a crushing defeat; the complications that interfere with their winning; the eventual victory, etc.

The movie faithfully follows the sports movie formula—and when the final credits roll in, we are shown scenes from the Emmy-winning documentary of the same title, which is where you'll see that the film's screenwriter, Jeff Maguire, has remained faithful to real life, as well.

Pep talks

He even got most of the dialogue down pat. It can be a pain sometimes, especially when The Rock (as Coach Porter) goes on and on with his clichéd pep talks. It's nice to be realistic, but surely, you can improve on something for the sake of art, can't you?

As for the formulaic storyline, you expect that in this kind of movie—and the audience expects it, as well.

In any case, stiff dialogue and predictable plot notwithstanding, The Rock manages to convince us that his character may be tough on the outside, but he's a warm and caring individual on the inside.

He's not brilliant, but he *can* act—though it was weird to see a tear trickling down his sharply chiseled cheek in one emotional scene.

Reality

The movie is further redeemed by gritty and exciting shots of the football games. Director Phil Joanou shot on location at the actual juvenile detention center, Camp Kilpatrick, and this adds to the feeling of reality.

Likewise graphic and believable are the scenes of gangland violence that the boys have been exposed to and participate in.

The film has a timely message: Give young, not-yet-hardened criminals a chance to redeem themselves so they can lead productive lives.

Sing a song of Christmas

From page G6

the man didn't look scary at all. In fact, his eyes seemed to glow upon seeing them.

"Come here, children. Would you care to sing another Christmas song for me?," asked the old man. "Please, do not be afraid," he pleaded.

Old man

The boys looked at each other and they agreed to go inside the house.

"My name is Ben. *Lolo* Ben," the old man said with a smile. "Please come in."

The boys followed *Lolo* Ben into the house without saying a word. The *sala* had chairs and tables on one side and a huge cabinet full of books on the other. It was clean and tidy, but it was lit only by a candle. They sat on the floor near the table where the lighted candle was. *Lolo* Ben sat on the chair beside them.

"Are you afraid of me? Were you afraid to come and do your caroling in front of my house?," he asked.

"Y-Yes," the kids confessed.

"We were afraid because this is the only house that doesn't have any Christmas lights on," said Nilo, forcing himself to smile.

"Don't you like Christmas?," asked Jong.

Lolo Ben gave a quick smile, then his face turned a bit sad.

"I like Christmas. I *love* Christmas," he said as the kids listened attentively. "But, I've long stopped celebrating it the way I used to, ever since my grandchildren moved away to live in Europe. I have two grandchildren the same age as you are. They used to sit right there and listen as I read them wonderful stories on Christmas Eve. Then, we would all sing carols as we waited for midnight to open the gifts underneath our Christmas tree," he related, his old eyes now aglow.

Reason

"But, they're far away from me now, and I don't see any reason why I should still celebrate Christmas," he sighed. —"Until I heard you singing in front of the house. It's been years since kids went caroling here. Maybe because, just like you, they were afraid to come because it's dark and scary here," he said softly.

"Don't you have any light aside from this candle?" asked Anton.

"I do. In fact," *Lolo* Ben stood up, "I'm going to turn them on right now!"

Suddenly, bright lights illuminated the whole house, revealing a large *sala* with Christmas trimmings everywhere! There were Christmas stockings on the walls, and a big Christmas tree at the corner with gifts underneath it.

Nilo, Jong and Anton were amazed, and shouted, "Wow! This is beautiful!" as they went near the Christmas tree. Seeing the kids' puzzled look at the gifts, *Lolo* Ben said:

"Those gifts were for my two grandchildren. I bought them in case they came to visit me this Christmas. But, you know what. . I'm giving them all to you!"

"Really?," Jong asked, thrilled.

"But, you don't know us," Nilo pointed out.

"Well, it doesn't matter. You've made me realize that, even if my grandchildren are not here, I should not stop celebrating Christmas. It is the time for sharing and loving people you may or may not know. It's the season of rejoicing in the birth of Jesus! Nothing can stop Christmas!," said *Lolo* Ben with the delight of sudden discovery.

"Oh, thank you very much, *Lolo* Ben!," the boys exclaimed as they excitedly unwrapped the gifts.

Boxes

When the wrappers were all ripped apart and only the boxes were sealed, the three boys decided to open the boxes at the same time.

"One, two, three!," they shouted in unison, as the boxes were opened and the contents were revealed.

"Wow!," they all chortled in surprise. "Toy musical instruments!," they chorused. Indeed, there was a toy horn and small guitar in the boxes!

"*Lolo* Ben, this is exactly what we're wishing for!," Nilo beamed.

"We were saving money to buy musical instruments—that is why we're caroling... and now we have them!," Jong grinned, teary-eyed.

"Well, maybe all this was *really* meant for you," said *Lolo* Ben, as he hugged the three boys. "Thank you for making me see what Christmas is truly all about."

The kids played their toy instruments as *Lolo* Ben laughed. It was a night they would never forget. As the boys said good night and thanked *Lolo* Ben, they promised to visit him again in his house—which was now as bright with lights and Christmas joy as any other house in town!

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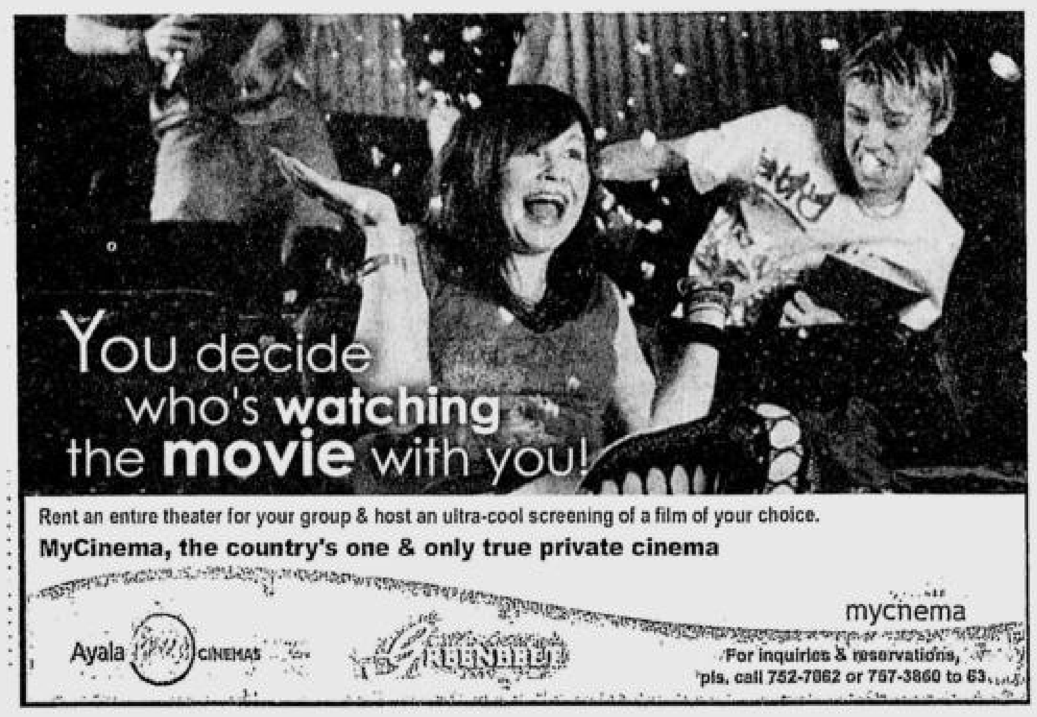

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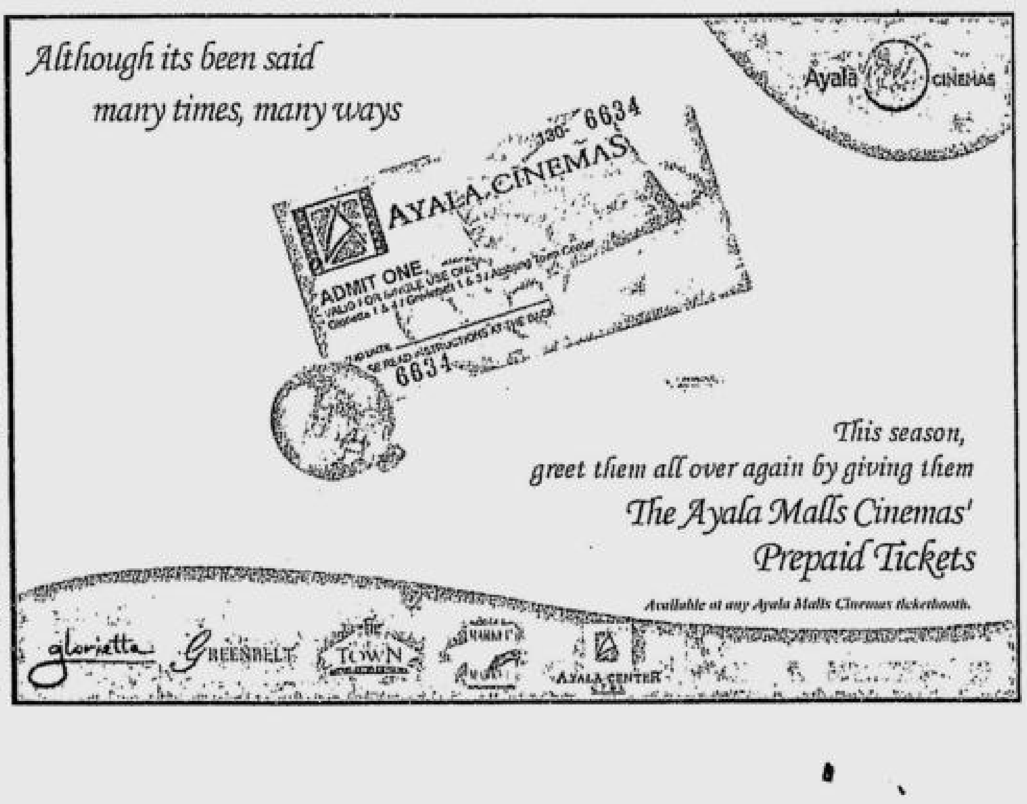

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Fountain of youth

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

A MOVIE WAS ONCE MADE REgarding the Fountain of Youth. It was set in America, where a family discovered the secret to eternal youth by simply drinking the water of a magical spring.

All the family members lived for hundreds of years and remained as young as when they first drank it. The story took an interesting turn when a young lady showed up, and the young boy fell in love with her. He convinced her to drink the special water, and she initially agreed.

However, as she was about to take a sip, an image suddenly flashed through her mind: She saw her mother cradling her dying grandmother in her arms.

Final scene

Reasoning that old age and dying were natural occurrences in life, she realized she didn't want to miss out on them. So, she decided not to drink.

The movie's final scene showed the ever-youthful young man standing in front of his beloved girlfriend's grave.

Some people might like the sentimentality of the movie, but here's our philosophical take: Nowadays, people espouse the thought that old age and death are natural. Like the movie, they proclaim that without death, we wouldn't be able to appreciate living.

This, however, is contrary to the truth. Man is not made up solely of material body. He is spirit—part and parcel of the Supreme Soul. By nature, he is a changeless entity that constantly moves in a sea of changes. A person has no beginning or end, yet his body is temporary and perishable.

In other words, we are already eternal. Old age and death are not natural for the soul. Death is contradictory to the real essence of the living being. And man's existence goes beyond the destruction of the material body.

Fulfillment

The young lady in the movie felt she had to go through old age and death to become fulfilled. An enlightened sage who lives for hundreds of years wouldn't seek death to find fulfillment. Instead, he serves the Supreme Being by preaching the truth.

A true devotee of the Supreme comes alive in the fullest sense of the word because he is aware that his eternal identity is interconnected to the Reservoir of all life.

The real fountain of youth is the fountain of life that results from our union with God.

Ensemble comedy brings sparks . . .

From page G1

SERVO. Dusky, Everyman appeal.

the talent portion of the beauty contest), the film is nevertheless set apart by its steadfast indie spirit—a storytelling style that defies mainstream cinema's staid conventions.

Like Thomas McCarthy's "The Station Agent," it's a movie with a curiously comedic tone that brings catharsis by alternately making its audience laugh and cry.

Dayton and Faris' vision is aided by a topnotch cast that works as a perfect ensemble that complements one another. It's hard to single out one actor's brilliant performance, because everyone serves his character with a sense of commitment and ease. But, young Ms. Breslin and superb Mr. Carell deserve special mention for bravely taking on roles that require them to stretch their thespic wings.

The Hoovers believe that the family that pushes a dilapidated VW minibus together, stays together. Each of them has flaws but they will win you over by bringing welcome shafts of sunshine to the not-so-sunshiny lives of their loved ones.

"Sa Ilalim ng Cogon"

D: Rico Maria Ilarde
S: Yul Servo, Julia Clarete

Yul Servo lends his dusky, Everyman appeal to Rico Maria Ilarde's imperfect but watchable action-horror flick.

Servo plays Sam, an ex-soldier who runs away with the mob's laundered money, and ends up hiding in a mysterious mansion, where he meets the mysterious Katia (Julia Clarete).

When attraction and love blossom between the star-crossed pair, they're forced to face the demons—real and imagined—that continually haunt them.

"Cogon" boasts of production values—crisp visual quality, clear sound, passionate performances—that are better than those seen in many indie productions.

Servo has an appealing presence that rightfully belongs on the silver screen—but sometimes, it's not enough to save the movie from a story that doesn't tell a clear tale.

Mood or music can only do so much if the story is implausible. Ilarde has always shown visual savvy, but with a story that lacks logic and narrative foresight, he fails to elevate his film beyond its intriguing premise. (Instructively, story development has always been a weak point in Ilarde's movies.) It's not enough to tell a hair-raising monster tale if it doesn't clearly explain how things and occurrences come about.

In future, we hope to see Ilarde go beyond the slick but superficial. The guy is talented, but there's a fine line that separates a technically polished chiller from the generic fate that befalls many run-of-the-mill horror flicks.

Cautionary notes for latest 'Starstruck' edition

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST SUNDAY EVENING, JUST as "Philippine Idol" was announcing its winner on ABC-5, "Starstruck 2007" was being launched on GMA-7. This juxtaposition was interesting on point of contrast because "Starstruck" is one of the oldest talent searches on the tube, while "Philippine Idol" has just concluded its first edition.

The two tilts are also quite different in focus and intent. "Philippine Idol" concentrates on singers from 16 to 28 years old, while "Starstruck" seeks to develop total entertainers who are teenagers and as cute as it's legally allowable.

Auditions

As per specifications, last Sunday's "Starstruck" show introduced 80 relentlessly *c-u-t-e* semi-finalists who had weathered the search's auditions, which were held all over the country. We hear tell that 10,000 young wannabes participated in the auditions, so the 80 semi-finalists were already the cream of the very huge crop.

Unfortunately, they had only a brief time to savor their success, because another major challenge was imminent: That very night, half of them would be asked to go home as the tilt whittled its contenders down to just 40.

As each survivor's name was announced (in five batches of eight), the excitement level in the studio palpably rose, then peaked. It's far too early to say anything productive about the 40 survivors' ultimate prospects, but we must note that, in general, they seem to be better-looking than last year's contenders.

In fact, there were three girls who were as pretty as all get-out, and should end up among the tilt's finalists. As for the boys, they too generally looked better than last year's aspirants, but no one *really* stood out in terms of looks or charisma.

Outcome

In this regard, the outcome of the previous year's tilt could prove instructive to this year's batch: The winner then, Marky Cielo, wasn't really a looker, but he had the edge in terms of his frisky dancing talent.

Another instructive part of last Sunday's show was its inclusion of past winners like Marky, Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado. Those three winners and/or runners-up have done very well indeed in their stellar entertainment careers—*but* other "winners" haven't done well at all.

That's a sobering insight for this year's batch of bright-eyed and relentlessly cute wannabes: It isn't really a matter of winning, but using that victory in a focused and hardworking way, to convert it into *actual* stardom.

That's a tough row to hoe, particularly if you're as young and clueless as some of the teenage bets obviously are. So, the tough work has just begun!

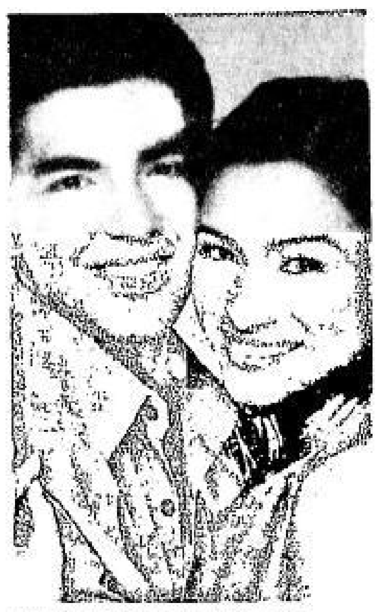
Successful graduates

As for the people running the show, we would like to point out that successful graduates, like Mark and Jennylyn, have become successful without being required to do "great" acting, singing, dancing and hosting. So, the search shouldn't be as "sadistic" as it sometimes used to be in training its raw contenders to be excellent singers, actors and dancers.

In other words, don't be so hard on the young talents in your care! This is not a frat or a sorority, so don't force these teenagers to pass tough "initiation" rites for them to prove that they "deserve" to be new teen idols.

Past editions of "Starstruck" have gone overboard in this regard, so cool it. Your job is to discover future teen faves, so be aware of their tender sensibilities and don't subject them to cruel tests that could harm their bodies and psyches.

GMA channel executives should supervise the "Starstruck" people more stringently in this regard, and a child psychologist should also keep tabs on how the people behind the show handle or mishandle their young wards this season.



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Ang kwento ng mga kababayan natin na nagtagumpay sa Hong Kong dahil sa galing sa pagluluto!

Let's Go! 4:00 pm
Ang first-ever youth comedy sa TV may ipapauso na naman, dahil ang *GO KADA LIVE* ngayong Sabado!

Star Magic Presents Abt Ur Luv 5:00 pm
Malungkot si Neri (SHAINA MAGDAYAO) *dahil nawalay siya sa kanyang ama. Will she find comfort in Gen's* (RAYVER CRUZ) *arms?*

TV PATROL SABADO 6:00 pm
Maraming balita ang dito mo lang mababalitaan!

Komiks Presents Da Adventures of Pedro Penduko
Haharapin ni *Pedro* ang kanyang bangungot!

John En Shirley
Si SAM MILBY liligawan si *Shirley* (MARICEL SORIANO)!

XXX Exklusibong Explosibong Exposé 8:30 pm
Identity thief sa Notary Public ibubunyag na!

Pinoy Dream Academy 9:30 pm
LIVE SA ARANETA COLISEUM
Makikilala n'yo na ang pinakabagong Pinoy superstar!

Sports Unlimited
Tara na't mag-dolphin-watching and surfing!

WEEKDAY HIGHLIGHTS
Ang ka-kasiyahan ng mas maraming Pilipino.

Homeboy 10:40 am
Pilipinas, Game K N B?
Wowowee
Kapamilya Cinema

Balikbayan
Enteng And Mokong (Kaming Mga Mababaw)
Bakit 'Di Totohanin
Tunay Na Tunay Gets Mo? Gets Ko!
Magic Kingdom: Alamat Ng Damortis

Inocenti De Ti
Titira na si *Florecita* sa minana niyang mansion. Umpisa na ang buhay-mayaman niya!

Noypi, Ikaw Ba 'To? *Tuwing Lunes*
Simple ba o maluho ang *Pasko ng Pinoy*? Aalamin 'yan ni GABE MERCADO.

LINGGO

11:45am ASAP '06
Kris Kringle with the stars! Something sweet, something spicy, something fun at something merry, lahat yan nasa ASAP '06!

Your Song: Ang Soundtrack Ng Love Life Mo
Presents Silent Night
Starring: ANGELICA PANGANIBAN at JAKE CUENCA

Love Spell Presents Pasko na, Santa Ko
Para ligtas si *Crisanto* (AIAI DELAS ALAS), sasagutin na nina *Abby* (KIM CHIU) at *Maria* (OLYN MEIMBAN) sina *Andrew* (MIKEE LEE) at *Miguel* (JOAQUI MENDOZA). Paano na sina *Ryan* (GERALD ANDERSON) at *Paolo* (MATT EVANS)?

4:00 pm THE BUZZ
Sampung bwelta ang maririnig mo!

6:00 pm TV PATROL LINGGO

GOIN' BULILIT
Walang tawad ang comedy sa bulilit tiangge adventure.

7:45 pm RATED K: HANDA KA NA BA?
It's a white Christmas with Ms. KORINA SANCHEZ

SHARON
Iba't-ibang lutuin para sa Noche Buena, yan ang pagsasaluhan nina DEREK RAMSEY, SUNSHINE CRUZ at SMOKEY MANALOTO.

Sunday's Best Presents:
9:45 pm The ABS-CBN Christmas Special 2006
"Tuloy Na Tuloy Pa Rin ang Pasko"
ang pinakamalaking Christmas party ng Kapamilya mo!

PRIMETIME BIDA

6pm Pangako Sa 'Yo
Si *Madam Claudia* magiging madam din ba ng masa?

TV Patrol World
Ang kabalitaan ng mas maraming Pilipino saan man sa mundo!

Kapamilya, Deal or No Deal
Pasko na, may makakakuha na ba ng 2 million pesos?

Super Inggo
Kaya ba ng mga superheroes ang dumadaming pwersa ng kasamaan?

Maging Sino Ka Man
Tuluyan na bang makakalimutan ni *Eli* (JOHN LLOYD CRUZ) si *Jackie* (BEA ALONZO)?

Princess Hours
Korea's number one trendy hit, nandito na! Ang nakakakilig na kwento ng ordinaryong babae na magiging instant prinsesa!

Maalaala Mo Kaya? *Tuwing Biyernes*
Hosted by: CHARO SANTOS-CONCIO
Ang kwento ng batang kalye na nangarap ng malaki.
Starring: SHARLENE SAN PEDRO

Wowowee
Pinoy Dream Academy
Sino ang hiniranging GRAND STAR DREAMER?
YENG
ANNE
CHAD
IRISH
JAY-R
RONNIE
Princess Hours
Super Inggo
BRAND NEW SHOW

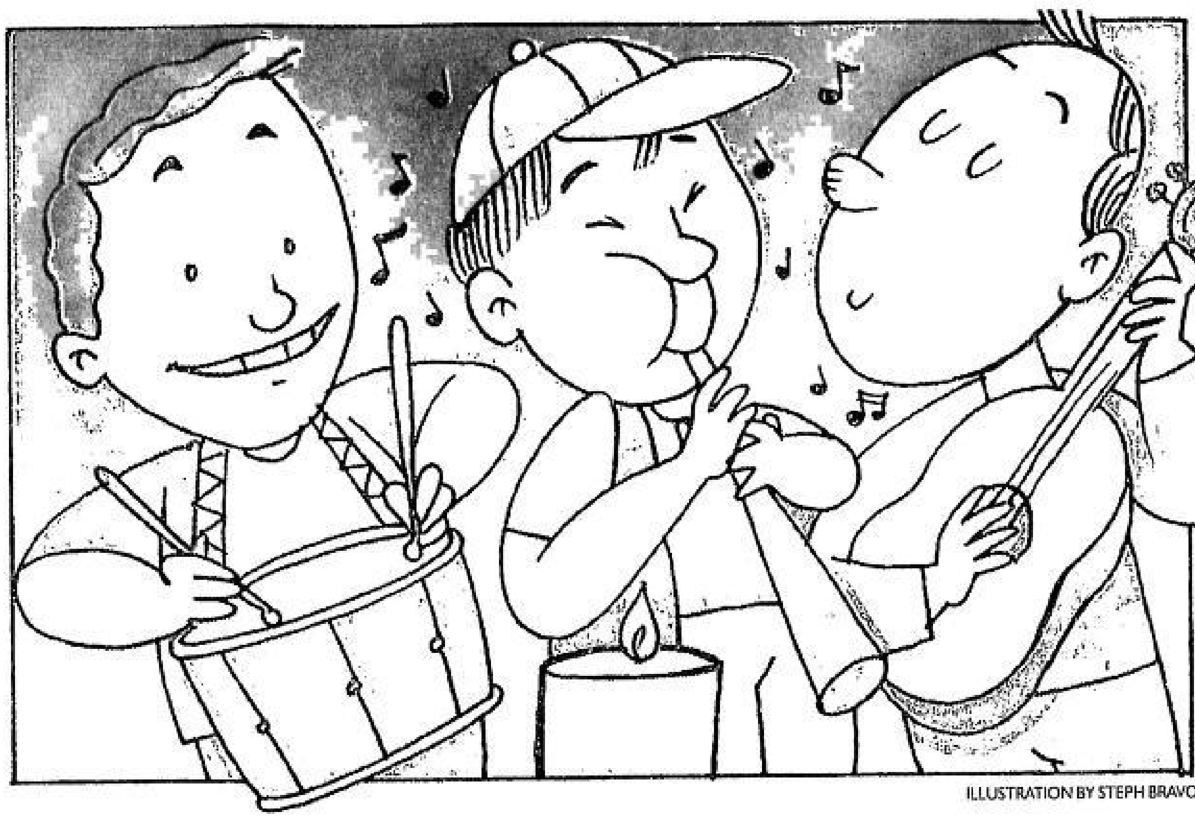


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

YULETIDE STORY FOR YOUNG READERS

Sing a song of Christmas

By Sharon Robas-Macawile

THE SUN WAS SHINING BRIGHTLY AS some kids were playing in the streets.

"Oh, what a beautiful day it is!," said Jong.

"It's truly a great day for playing," Nilo agreed.

The kids were having a grand time playing *tumbang preso, patintero* and other games as the cool December breeze soothed their flushed faces. It was Saturday and there was laughter everywhere.

"I wonder what's taking Anton so long to join us," asked Jong.

Anton lived a few blocks away from Jong and Nilo. The three usually spent hours playing *habulan-taya* on the street. After playing, they would rest under a big tree at the edge of town.

"Hey, Jong, Nilo!," shouted Anton as he ran toward the two.

"Anton, we've been waiting for you for so long. Where have you been?," Nilo demanded. Jong noticed that Anton was holding a box.

"What have you got in there?," Jong asked pointing at the box.

Present

"Well, I was late because my grandmother came from the city this morning. She'll spend the holidays with us. She gave me *this* as her present!," Anton explained. Anton opened the box as Jong and Nilo waited excitedly.

"Wow!," Nilo exclaimed. "It's a toy drum!"

The three kids were so delighted with the toy that they didn't play *habulan* that day. They sat under a tree, and had fun taking turns playing the drum, singing songs and laughing out loud.

Every day after that, they would play the drum until they ran out of songs to sing.

"I wish I had the same drum as yours, Anton. It's really cool," sighed Nilo one day.

"I wish I had one, too—or another toy musical instrument—so we could all play at the same time," Jong grinned.

Anton thought of a good idea to help his friends: "Do you think we could use my drum for caroling?," he asked.

"That's a great idea!," Nilo exclaimed.

"We could go around singing carols at night and earn some money," Jong chirped.

"And if we get enough money, we could buy musical instruments for you!," Anton gleefully shouted.

So, the three friends practiced singing carols as often as they could. They were all very excited. Finally, they were ready to go caroling!

Child carolers

Christmas was only a week away and at night, their town was ablaze with colorful lights and *parols* glittering at every window. Child carolers competed with each other as they loudly sang at every house they could go to. They played different musical instruments made from recycled materials.

Some brought empty bottles and sticks; others made drums out of empty milk cans, *maracas* from empty cans filled with sand, and tambourines from *tansans*.

For their part, Jong, Nilo and Anton were all set with Anton's drum as their main instrument. Other kids who saw them would take a curious if not envious look at Anton's colorful plastic toy drum. It had the colors red, blue, yellow and green, and a silver strap that sparkled at night.

First stop was a big house at the corner. The house was filled with lights blinking simultaneously, with *parols* hanging at all four windows. The boys were so awed by the sight that they almost forgot to sing!

"All right, let's start singing," said Anton as he prepared his drum.

They sang: "We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas—and a Happy New Year!"

They were happy with the coins they got from each house they went to. Some gave P5, others P10. After going to almost every house in their town, and with their pockets getting heavier with *barya*, they decided to go home.

No lights

While walking, they noticed a big, old house not far from the edge of town. The big house didn't have any colorful Christmas lights at its porch, nor any *parol* on its windows. It was a bit dark inside and only one lighted candle was flickering in the darkness.

"Do you think we should go caroling there?," asked Jong.

"Oh no," said Nilo, sounding a bit scared. "There are no lights in there, they probably do not want to be disturbed."

"But, it's Christmastime!," Jong exclaimed. "Everybody loves Christmas! Besides there's a lighted candle, so there should be somebody home."

"Well, let's try. Who knows, we might get lucky and be given P20 by the owner," whispered Anton.

"O-OK, but if nobody comes out after we sing, we should all go home, *ha*?," said Nilo his voice cracking.

The three boys went ahead and began to sing as soon they reached the front door of the house.

"*Ang Pasko ay sumapit, tayo ay mangagsi-awit...*," they sang. After the first song ended, they fell silent as they waited for somebody to come out of the house.

"Maybe we should leave now," whispered Nilo.

"Shhh! Let's sing another song...," Anton suggested.

"Si-iii-lent Night, Ho-ooo-ly Night, All is calm, all is bright..."

The song was about to end when they heard the doorknob click open. Their hearts were pounding as loud as the thumping of Anton's drum. And they weren't sure if they could still finish the song or had to dash as fast as they could away from the house. Nilo's legs were shaking...

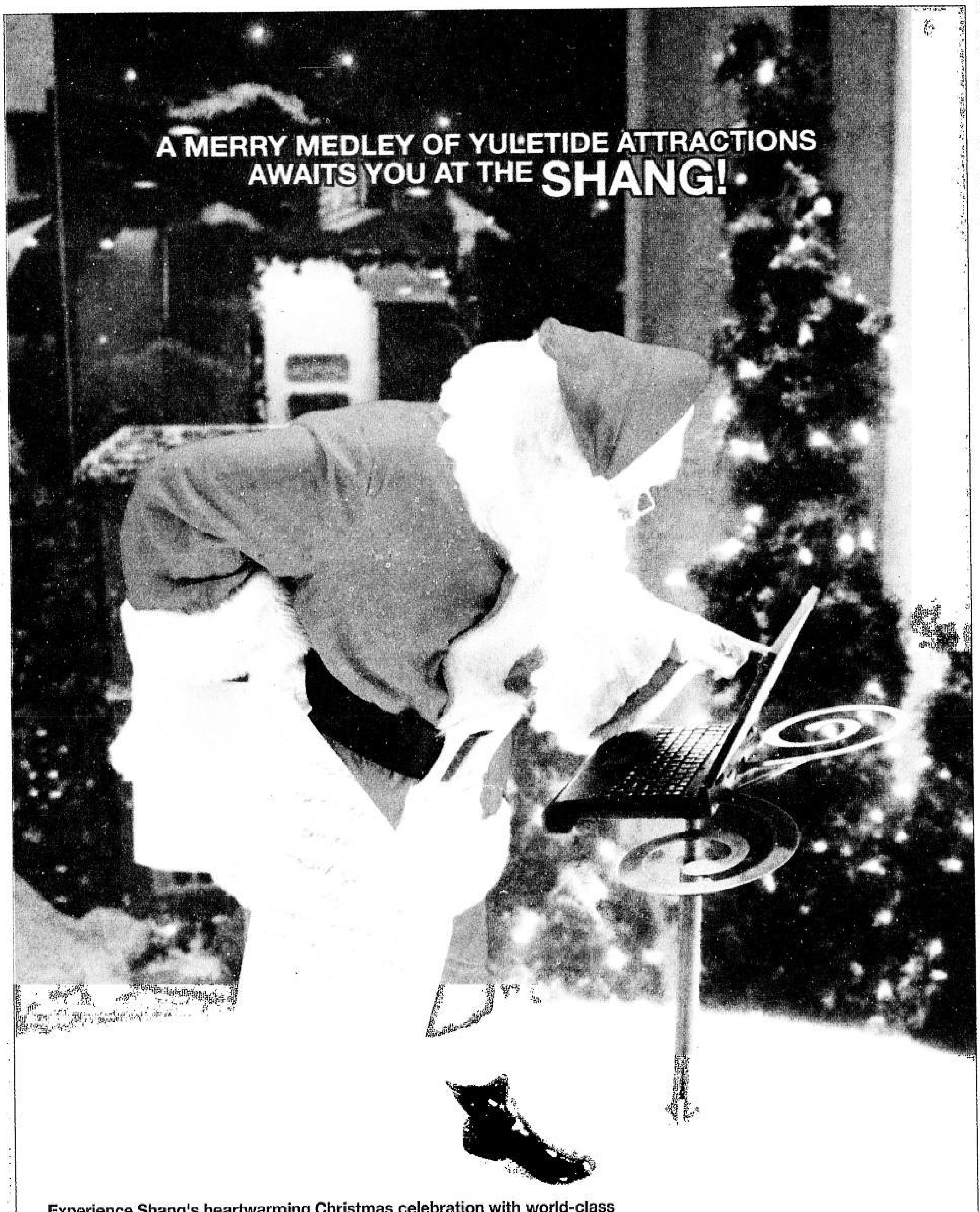
"Run!," shouted Nilo. "C'mon, let's go!," he pulled the arms of Anton and Jong.

But before they could all run away . . .

"Wait!," said a loud voice coming from inside the dark, forbidding house.

The kids stopped and slowly looked back at the house. There stood an old man with white hair and a cane. They were all frightened at first, but they felt relieved upon seeing that

SING/ G2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DECEMBER 1 (FRIDAY)
Holly Ho!
Philippine Opera Company
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Liquefied Orange, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 2 (SATURDAY)
Songs of the Season
UP Singing Ambassadors
Grand Atrium, 6:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

Classified, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 3 (SUNDAY)
Christmas Prelude
Banda Momz of Morong Rizal
Grand Atrium, 5:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

The Traditional Carols of Christmas
Las Piñas Boys Choir
Caroling around the mall,
4:00 - 5:00 pm

DECEMBER 8 (FRIDAY)
My Favorite Things
Philippine Opera Company
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Perfect Jazz Rhythms
Jazz A Little Different
The Ledge, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

New Level, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 9 (SATURDAY)
A Celebration of Trumpets for the Holidays
A Marks & Spencer Presentation
Grand Atrium, 5:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

Holly Ho!
Philippine Opera Company
Caroling around the mall,
4:00 - 5:00 pm

Limited Edition, Streetscape,
10:00 pm

DECEMBER 10 (SUNDAY)
A Suzuki Christmas Carol
Suzuki Music Kids
Grand Atrium, 5:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

DECEMBER 15 (FRIDAY)
Child Emmanuel, A Christmas Concert
Jesuit Communications Foundation, Inc.
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Perfect Jazz Rhythms
H3O
The Ledge, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Acoustic Jive, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 16 (SATURDAY)
Christmas with a Tenor
Jonathan Badon and the Philippine Opera Company
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

Amadeus, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 17 (SUNDAY)
Ballet Favorites
Effie Nañas Dancentre
Grand Atrium, 5:30 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

Holly Ho!
Philippine Opera Company
Caroling around the mall, 4:00 - 5:00 pm

DECEMBER 18 (MONDAY)
The Magic of Christmas
Mandaluyong Children's Choir
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

DECEMBER 19 (TUESDAY)
Yuletide Harmonies
UP Madrigal Singers
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

DECEMBER 20 (WEDNESDAY)
Little Carolers
Las Piñas Boy's Choir
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

DECEMBER 21 (THURSDAY)
Christmas with a Jazz Great
Mon David
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

DECEMBER 22 (FRIDAY)
A Christmas Celebration
Philippine Opera Company
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Perfect Jazz Rhythms
Jazz Momentum
The Ledge, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Silk, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 23 (SATURDAY)
The San Miguel Christmas Music Festival
San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and San Miguel Master Chorale
Grand Atrium, 6:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30pm

Flintstones, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 24 (SUNDAY)
It's Christmas Tonight
Instrumental Trio
Grand Atrium, 5:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

DECEMBER 29 (FRIDAY)
Yuletide Minstrels
Instrumental Duo
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Perfect Jazz Rhythms
HQ Jazz Trio
The Ledge, 6:30 - 9:00 pm

Toy Symphony, Streetscape,
10:00 pm

DECEMBER 30 (SATURDAY)
GAGE, a Christmas Story
Bart Guingona and the Philippine Opera Company
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30pm

Passage, Streetscape, 10:00 pm

DECEMBER 31 (SUNDAY)
Auld Lang Syne
HQ Jazz Quartet
Grand Atrium, 5:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

JANUARY 6, 2007 (SATURDAY)
Cheers for the New Year!
Chamber Ensemble
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

JANUARY 7, 2007 (SUNDAY)
A Night of Brass Music
UST Brass Quintet
Grand Atrium, 7:00 pm

Piano Christmas Melodies
Indulgences, Level 3, 2:30 - 6:30 pm

Santa Claus will go around the mall to give candies to children from 5:00 – 8:00 pm on these dates

With snow blizzard during performances on these dates

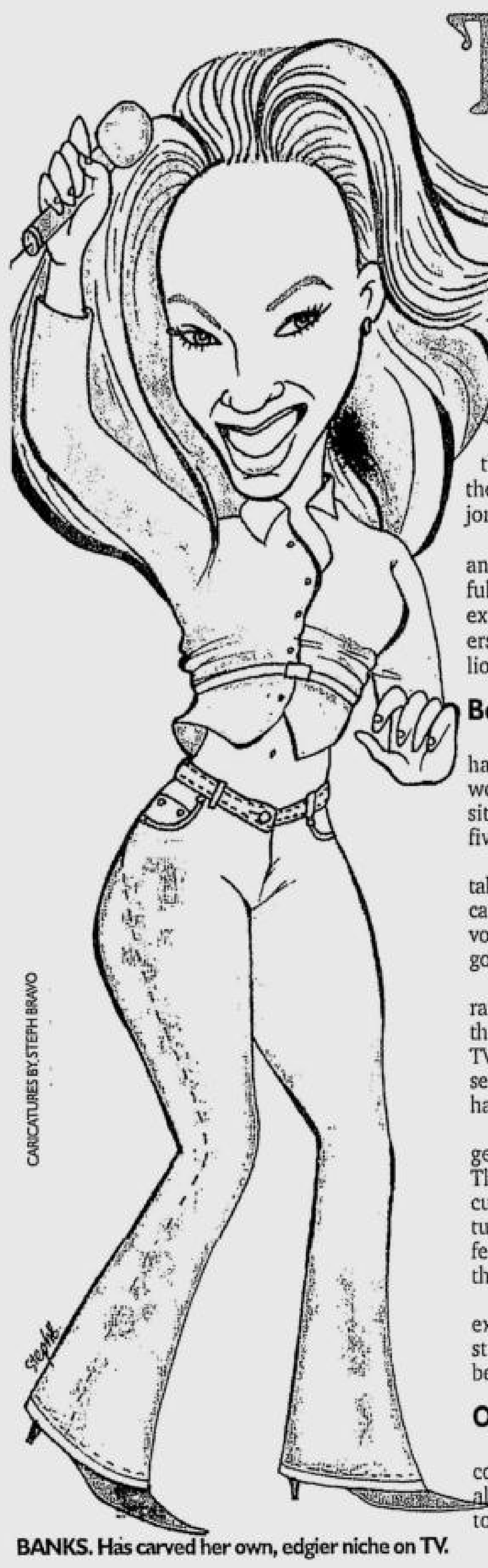
Events are subject to change without prior notice.

Shangri-La Plaza

IN THIS ISSUE
AMARELA: Bohol at its best /H4

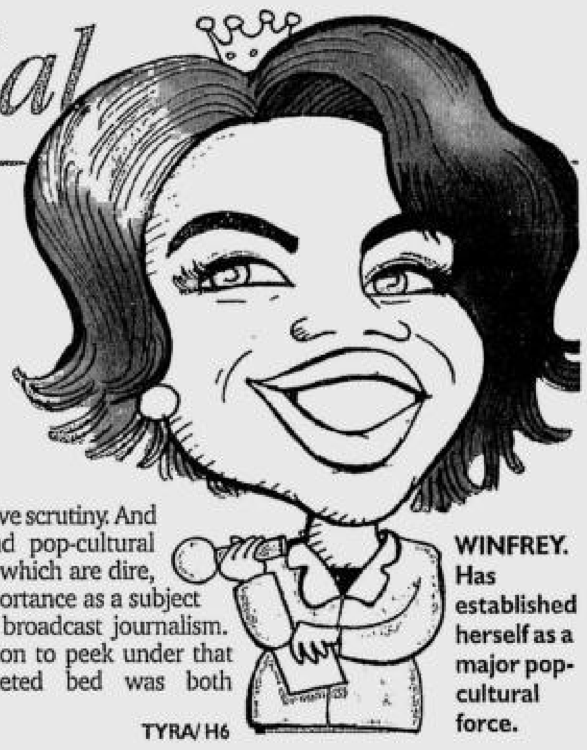
SATURDAY *Special*

Tyra positions herself as Oprah's successor



CARICATURES BY STEPH BRAVO

BANKS. Has carved her own, edgier niche on TV.



WINFREY. Has established herself as a major pop-cultural force.

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR DECADES NOW, OPRAH WINFREY has made a name for herself as the first African-American woman to host her own syndicated network TV talk show. More than just longevity on the tube, Oprah can be rightfully proud of the fact that she's established herself as a major pop-cultural force in the United States.

She's chosen to do more than just inform and entertain, and now inspires millions to fulfill their potential to the fullest. Taking this extra step hasn't been easy, but grateful viewers have rewarded Oprah by making her a billionaire!

Best bet

But, Oprah is now in her 50s, so TV people have started to place their bets on other black women who could move up to leadership position on the TV screen, possibly in the next five years. Our own best bet: Tyra Banks.

When Tyra started hosting her own daily TV talk show, her prospects for success were iffy, because her program had a strong high-fashion flavor. This wasn't surprising, because Ms Banks got her start in the celebrity biz as a supermodel.

After a decade of fame and fortune on the ramp and in print, however, Tyra decided to up the ante and transform herself into a bankable TV personality. She started out by hosting the search for "America's Next Top Model," which has had several successful seasons to date.

But, her biggest and potentially most dangerous move was to host her own talk show. The program started off badly because it focused on the high-fashion audience niche and turned off some mainstream viewers with its features on the gaunt and florid denizens of the world of *haute couture*.

In time, however, the show refocused and expanded its features to include more mainstream topics and guests, so it started to do better in the TV ratings race.

Off the beaten track

At the same time, Tyra has opted to not just come off as a younger Oprah, but to occasionally go off the beaten track in search of edgier topics and themes.

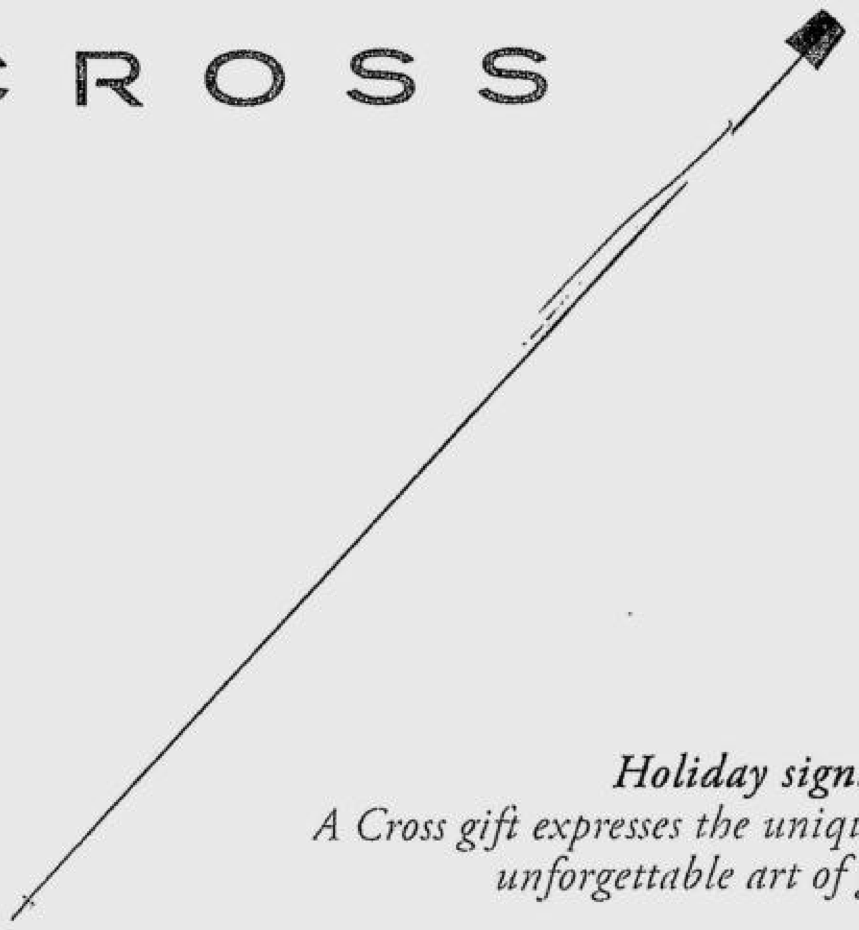
Most recently, Tyra subjected herself to a gender makeover and passed herself off as a man, so she could report on how males really think and act!

And, a couple of weeks ago, she did a no-holds-barred feature on the US pornography industry, interviewing some of its leading female and male "stars," and taking viewers behind its closed sets.

Porn movies are a billion-dollar industry, so they really deserve scrutiny. And their ethical and pop-cultural effects, some of which are dire, add to their importance as a subject of investigative broadcast journalism. So, Tyra's decision to peek under that black satin-sheeted bed was both

TYRA/ H6

CROSS



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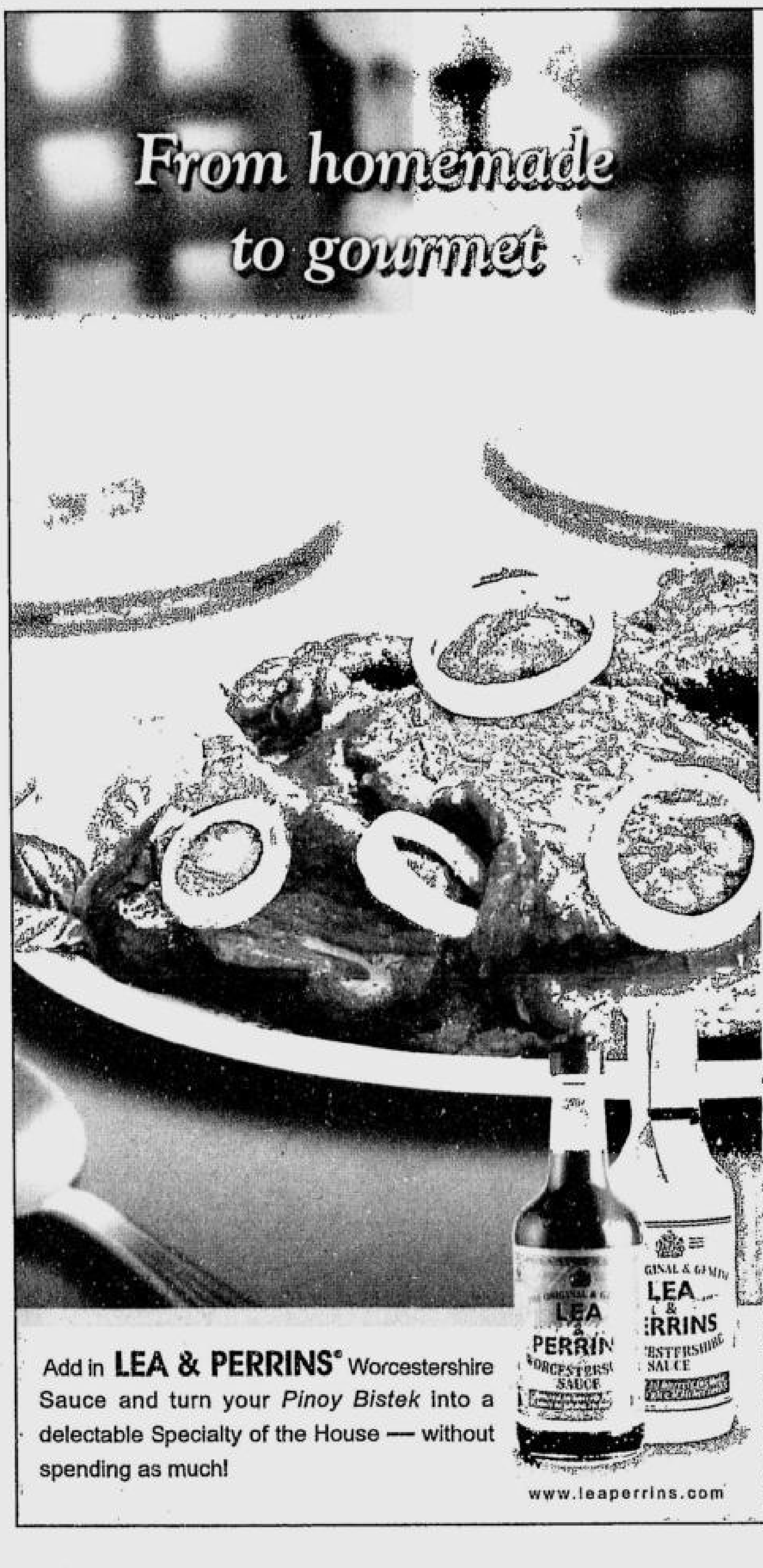

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Serves 4
Preparation time: 30 mins.
Cooking time: 30 mins

Ingredients:
500 grams beef sirloin (with some fat), cut into beef steak slices and pounded
4 Tbsp flour
½ cup soy sauce
½ cup lemon/calamansi juice
1 Tbsp **LEA & PERRINS** Worcestershire Sauce
1 Tbsp freshly ground black pepper
2 potatoes cut into ¼ inch discs
2 onions sliced into thin rounds
6 Tbsp cooking oil

Procedure:
1. Mix soy sauce, lemon juice, **LEA & PERRINS** Worcestershire Sauce and black pepper in a large bowl.
2. Marinate beef slices in soy mixture for 30 minutes then drain, reserving the marinade. Lightly dredge beef slices in flour.
3. In medium hot oil, sear beef slices a few slices at a time for 30 seconds each side and set aside.
4. Pour off half the oil in the searing pan and sauté onions for a few seconds. Add in the potato slices and pour reserved marinade plus water and simmer for 20 minutes or till potato slices are soft.
5. Place beef slices back to the sauce and let simmer for 5 minutes more.
6. Serve immediately.

[illegible] apron [illegible] the question:

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Series of 2006

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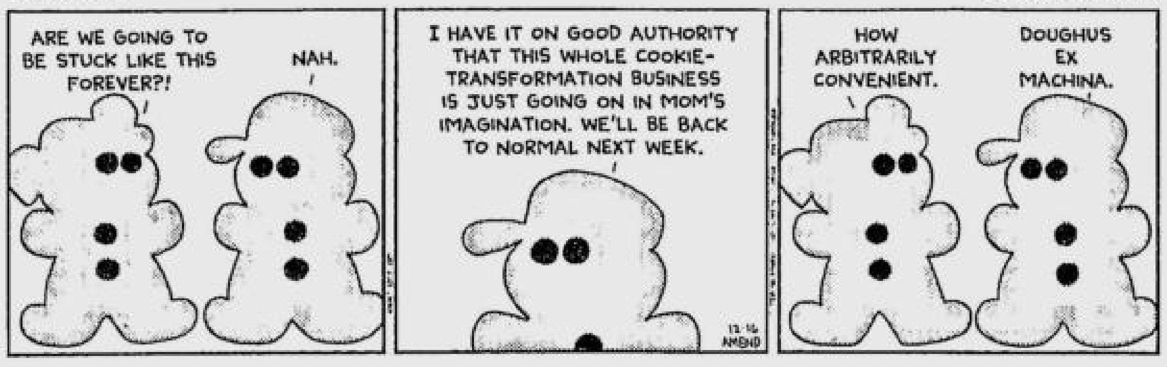
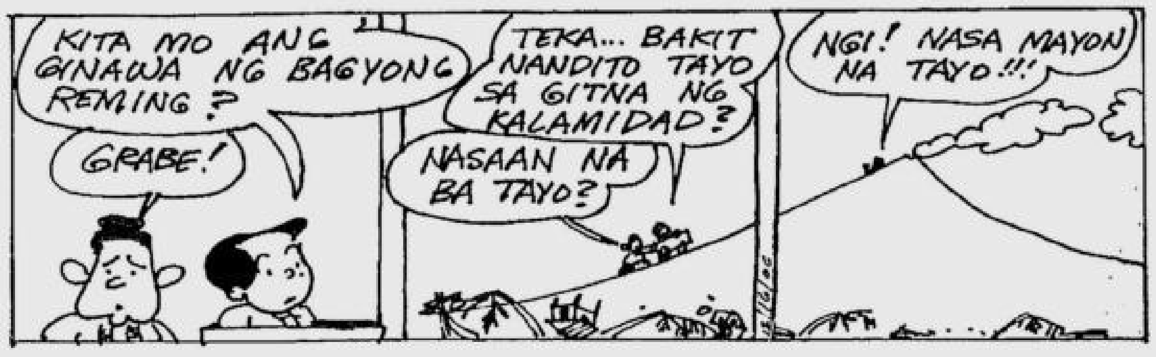
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2006

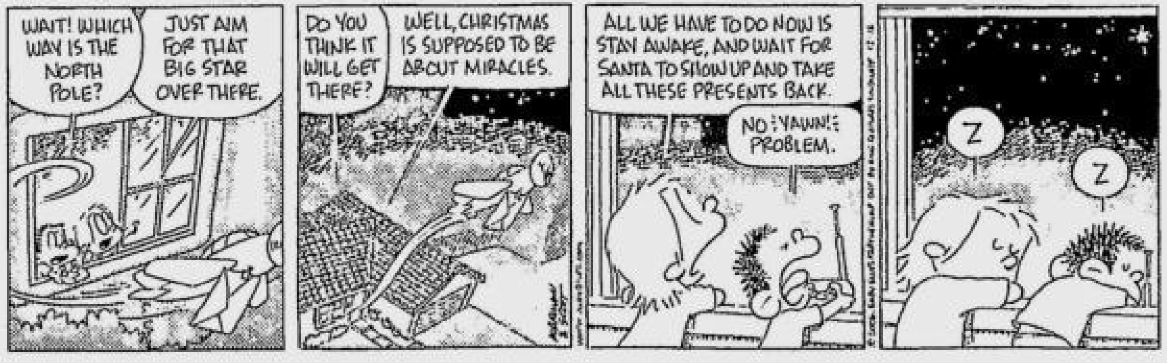
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


ARE WE GOING TO BE STUCK LIKE THIS FOREVER?!
NAH.
I HAVE IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT THIS WHOLE COOKIE-TRANSFORMATION BUSINESS IS JUST GOING ON IN MOM'S IMAGINATION. WE'LL BE BACK TO NORMAL NEXT WEEK.
12-16 AMEND
HOW ARBITRARILY CONVENIENT.
DOUGHUS EX MACHINA.

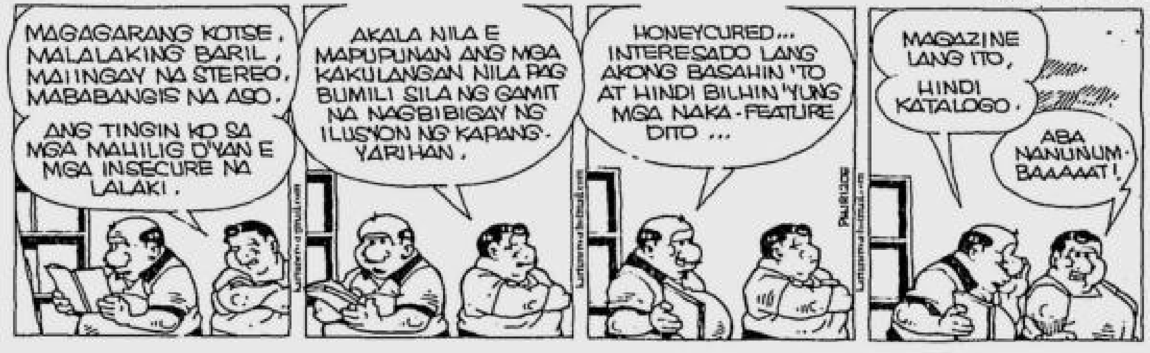
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KITA MO ANG GINAWA NG BAGYONG REMING ?
GRABE!
TEKA... BAKIT NANDITO TAYO SA GITNA NG KALAMIDAD?
NASAAN NA BA TAYO?
NGI! NASA MAYON NA TAYO!!!

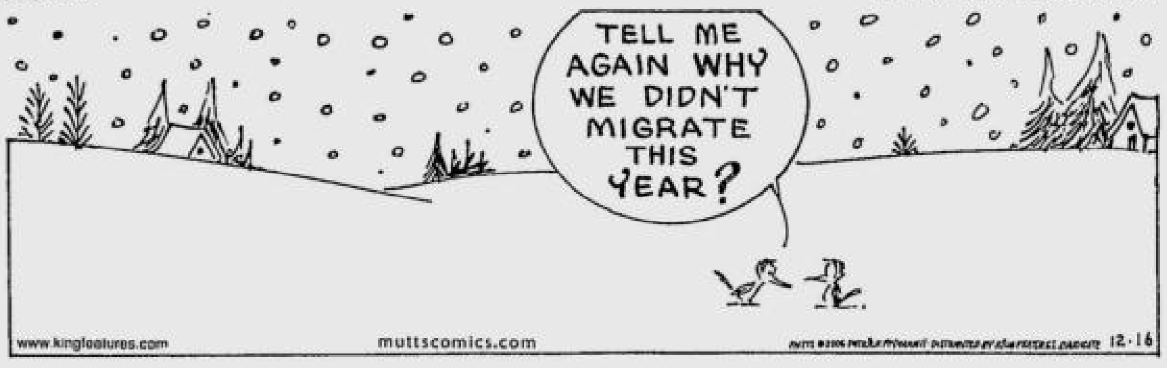
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


WAIT! WHICH WAY IS THE NORTH POLE?
JUST AIM FOR THAT BIG STAR OVER THERE.
DO YOU THINK IT WILL GET THERE?
WELL, CHRISTMAS IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABOUT MIRACLES.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO NOW IS STAY AWAKE, AND WAIT FOR SANTA TO SHOW UP AND TAKE ALL THESE PRESENTS BACK.
NO *YAWN* PROBLEM.
Z
Z

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAGAGARANG KOTSE, MALALAKING BARIL, MAIINGAY NA STEREO, MABABANGIS NA ASO.
ANG TINGIN KO SA MGA MAHILIG D'YAN E MGA INSECURE NA LALAKI.
AKALA NILA E MAPUPUNAN ANG MGA KAKULANGAN NILA PAG BUMILI SILA NG GAMIT NA NAGBIBIGAY NG ILUSYON NG KAPANGYARIHAN.
HONEYCURED... INTERESADO LANG AKONG BASAHIN 'TO AT HINDI BILHIN 'YUNG MGA NAKA-FEATURE DITO ...
MAGAZINE LANG ITO, HINDI KATALOGO.
ABA NANUNUMBAAAAAT!

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


TELL ME AGAIN WHY WE DIDN'T MIGRATE THIS YEAR?
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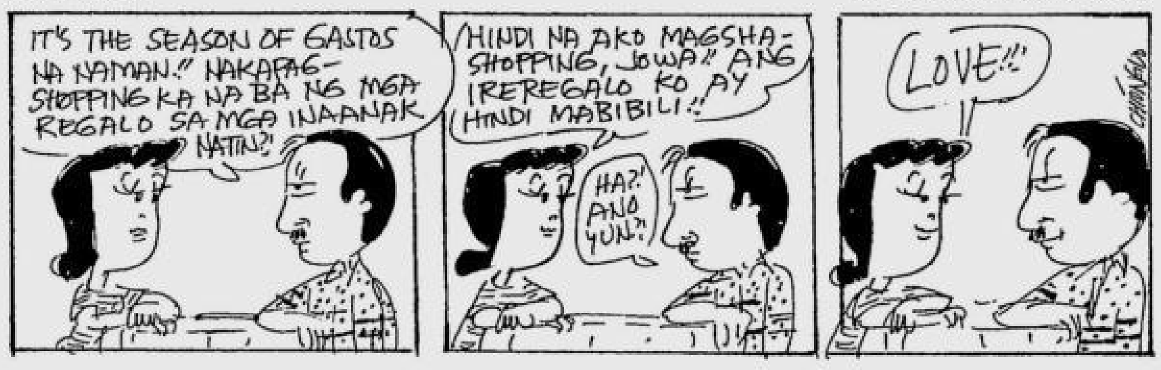
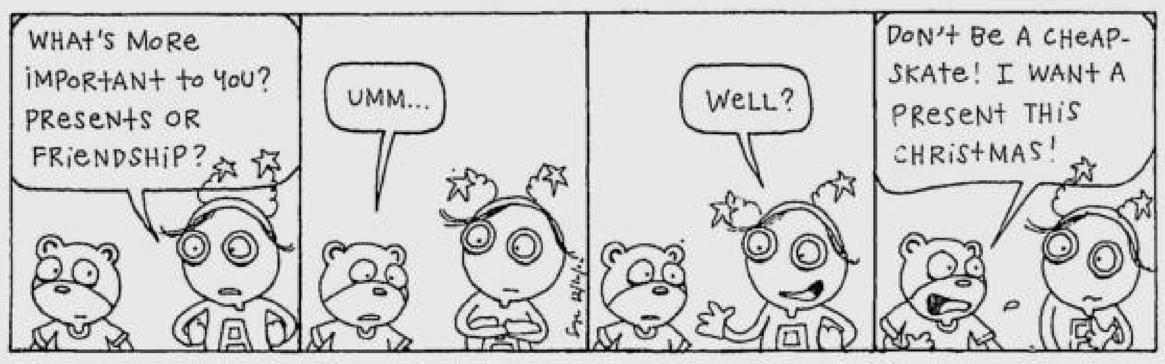
muttscomics.com
12-16

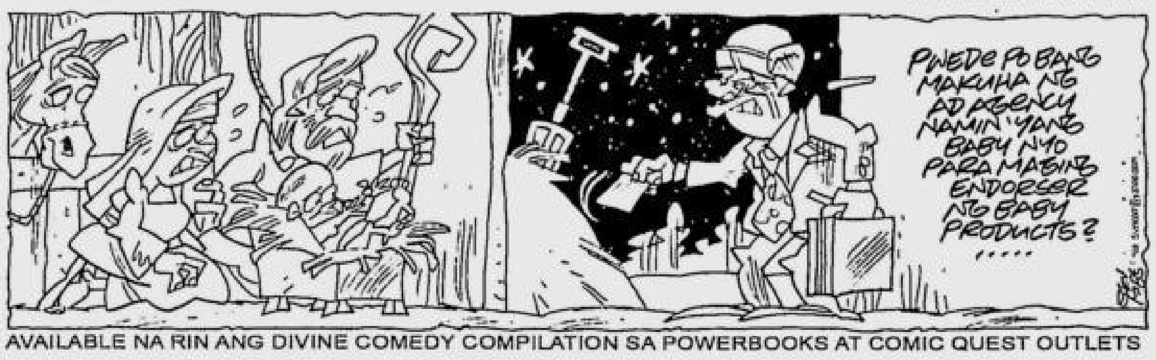
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


IT'S THE SEASON OF GASTOS NA NAMAN!" NAKAPAG-SHOPPING KA NA BA NG MGA REGALO SA MGA INAANAK NATIN?
HINDI NA AKO MAGSHA-SHOPPING, JOWA!" ANG IREREGALO KO AY HINDI MABIBILI!!
HA?! ANO YUN?!
LOVE!!

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

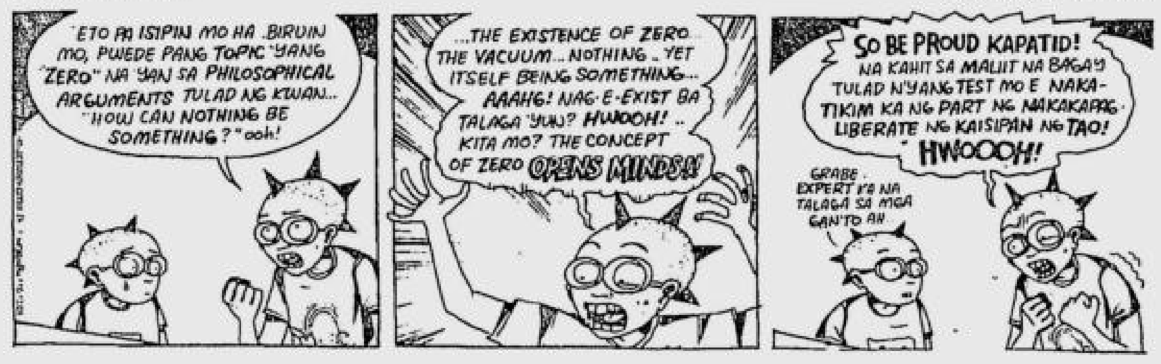

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU? PRESENTS OR FRIENDSHIP?
UMM...
WELL?
DON'T BE A CHEAP-SKATE! I WANT A PRESENT THIS CHRISTMAS!

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

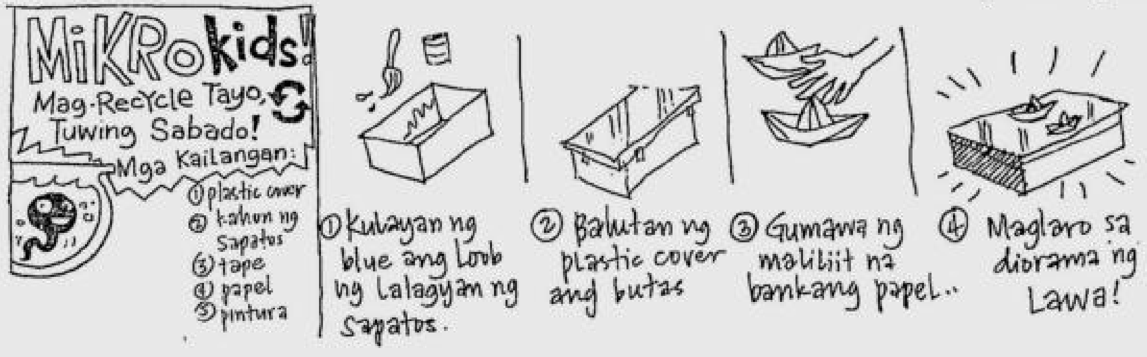

PWEDE PO BANG MAKUHA NG AD AGENCY NAMIN 'YANG BABY N'YO PARA MAGING ENDORSER NG BABY PRODUCTS? .....

AVAILABLE NA RIN ANG DIVINE COMEDY COMPILATION SA POWERBOOKS AT COMIC QUEST OUTLETS

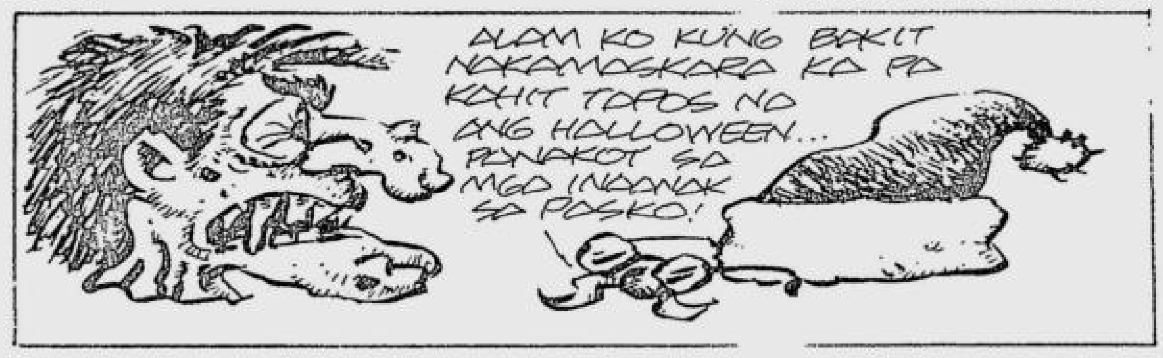
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


'ETO PA ISIPIN MO HA. BIRUIN MO, PWEDE PANG TOPIC 'YANG "ZERO" NA 'YAN SA PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS TULAD NG KWAN... "HOW CAN NOTHING BE SOMETHING?" ooh!
...THE EXISTENCE OF ZERO... THE VACUUM... NOTHING... YET ITSELF BEING SOMETHING... AAAHG! NAG-E-EXIST BA TALAGA 'YUN? HWOOH!.. KITA MO? THE CONCEPT OF ZERO OPENS MINDS!!
SO BE PROUD KAPATID! NA KAHIT SA MALIIT NA BAGAY TULAD N'YANG TEST MO E NAKA-TIKIM KA NG PART NG NAKAKAPAG-LIBERATE NG KAISIPAN NG TAO! HWOOOH!
GRABE. EXPERT KA NA TALAGA SA MGA GAN'TO AH.

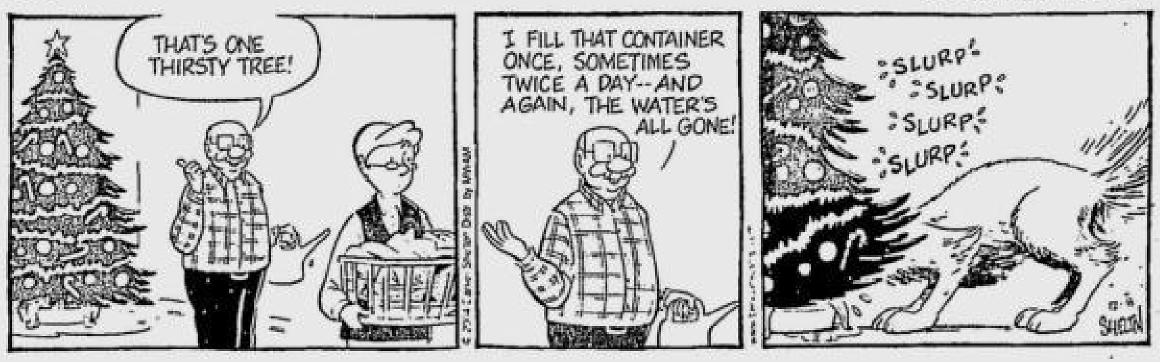
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo kids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
① plastic cover
② kahon ng sapatos
③ tape
④ papel
⑤ pintura
① Kulayan ng blue ang loob ng lalagyan ng sapatos.
② Balutan ng plastic cover ang butas
③ Gumawa ng maliliit na bankang papel..
④ Maglaro sa diorama ng Lawa!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ALAM KO KUNG BAKIT NAKAMASKARA KA PA KAHIT TAPOS NA ANG HALLOWEEN... PANAKOT SA MGA INAANAK SA PASKO!

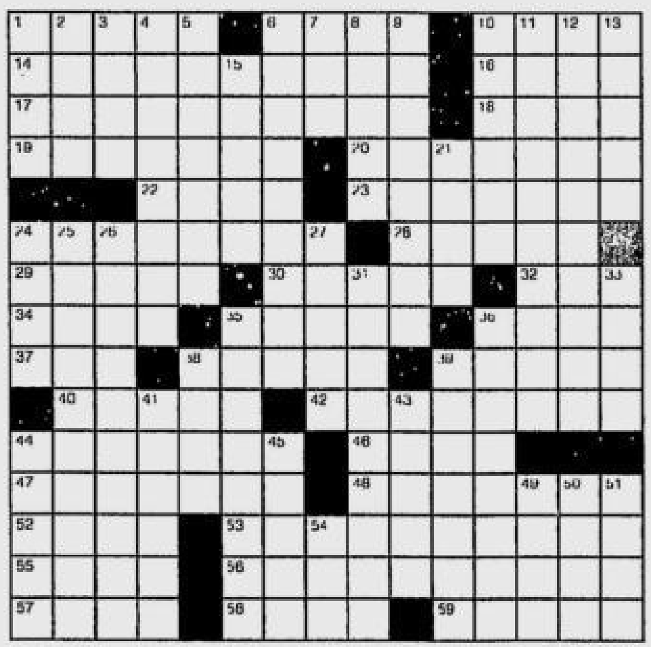
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


THAT'S ONE THIRSTY TREE!
I FILL THAT CONTAINER ONCE, SOMETIMES TWICE A DAY--AND AGAIN, THE WATER'S ALL GONE!
SLURP
SLURP
SLURP
SLURP
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Political payoff
6 Look for
10 Instrument in an Italian orchestra
14 Break out anew
16 Influence
17 Intrinsically
18 Czech Republic's capital in Berlin
19 Elder from the distaff side
20 Fats Domino's first name
22 One Truman
23 Kitchen appliance
24 Forward
28 Pick up the tab
29 Climbing vines
30 Garden waterers
32 Pester continuously
34 Fail to make contact
35 Bulb power
36 Conflagration
37 Kreskin's forte
38 Of the soft palate
39 Killed violently
40 Desire inordinately
42 Colorful shrubs
44 Stories in installments
46 Fragment
47 European bunting
48 Cleanse with water before packaging
52 Balustrade
53 Conspicuous
55 Sicilian spouter
56 Current direction
57 Standing rules, for short
58 Buck
59 Marsh plant

DOWN
1 Network
2 City on the Truckee
3 Hurtin'
4 Handouts
5 Ted and Tina
6 Major-domo
7 $ quote
8 Success in spades
9 Prime underlying elements
10 Place side by side
11 Of a comic opera location
12 Solar system models
13 "Ragged Dick" author
15 Slow-witted
21 Veteran seafarers
24 Hoarfrost
25 Disembowel
26 Amusing (oneself)
27 Add up
31 Powerfully built
33 Roman patrilineal clan
35 Vital nesting areas
36 Plates, platters, saucers etc.
38 Cutlet meat
39 Wall and Lombard
41 Stringed instruments
43 Gov't drug agents
44 More tender
45 Treat with haughty disdain
49 Laid up
50 Smelter's residue
51 Blood pigment
54 Former PanAm rival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By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

12/16/06

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	A	D	■	N	A	H	A	■	L	E	A	S	H
A	R	N	O	■	I	T	E	R	■	A	G	R	E	E
C	A	D	R	E	A	M	I	N	■	M	O	T	E	L
S	P	Y	I	N	G	■	R	A	S	A	■	R	P	M
■	■	■	A	R	A	B	■	Z	O	R	B	A	■	■
S	I	G	N	O	R	E	T	■	P	R	A	V	D	A
E	R	A	■	L	A	T	I	S	H	■	T	E	E	M
R	E	O	I	L	■	T	A	W	■	S	E	L	M	A
I	N	N	S	■	D	A	N	I	S	H	■	E	M	S
N	E	M	A	T	O	■	T	S	Q	U	A	R	E	S
■	■	■	Y	O	U	L	L	■	H	U	T	U	■	■
W	P	M	■	S	E	E	K	■	E	I	S	N	E	R
C	L	I	N	K	■	I	N	W	A	N	T	S	M	E
T	O	N	N	E	■	G	E	E	K	■	R	E	I	N
U	D	D	E	R	■	H	E	D	Y	■	O	C	T	O

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12/16/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a great imagination! You embrace life in a very physical way. You're independent and like to be your own boss. The people in your close circle play a crucial part in your life. You attack important projects with enormous energy. People admire your output. Be ready for exciting, new, fresh beginnings in the year ahead.

Birth date of: Arthur C. Clarke, novelist; Bill Hicks, comedian; Noel Coward, actor/playwright.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You will learn something important today. You're interested to hear what serious teachers say about many subjects—politics, religion and metaphysics or philosophy.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a good day to make long-range plans about jointly held responsibilities or shared property. Your thinking is very clear. Furthermore, you have a long-range view of things.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is an excellent day to sit down with partners and close friends to make long-range plans about anything. Your thinking is solid, clear and practical. You'll get things done.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This can be an extremely productive day at work. You have the concentrated focus to take care of details. You're willing to handle routine, mundane matters.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Sit down with someone to examine and define the responsibilities you have for artistic projects, vacations, professional sports or working with children. You want some practical results in these areas.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Do repairs and fix what is broken at home. If you're shopping for home or family, buy practical, long-lasting things. You're concerned with your kitchen-sink reality.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're levelheaded and logical today. You're taking a long-range view of things because you want practical results for whatever you do. This is a good day to sign contracts and enter into negotiations with others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a very good day for long-range business plans. It's also a good day for business and commerce in general. Whatever you decide today will have a practical, positive impact for a long time to come.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're willing to work at boring, routine matters because you want practical results. You'll defer today's pleasure for tomorrow's rewards.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is an excellent day to work alone and accomplish a lot. Don't involve yourself with others. Keep your eye on the prize.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Someone older or more experienced has some good advice for you. Excellent! You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Why not stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before you?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs will be practical and very doable today. Everyone wants to see some positive, long-term results. Learn what you can from someone who is more experienced.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		9						
	2		8					
7		5		3				9
	6		2				8	
4		2				1		6
	9				4		3	
6				7		4		2
					3		9	
						8		

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/16

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	7	6	4	9	8	1	2	5
4	8	2	6	1	5	9	3	7
5	1	9	7	3	2	8	6	4
2	9	4	1	8	3	7	5	6
6	5	1	2	7	9	3	4	8
7	3	8	5	4	6	2	1	9
8	6	3	9	5	1	4	7	2
9	2	7	3	6	4	5	8	1
1	4	5	8	2	7	6	9	3

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Proud father marks 65th year

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

FIVE YEARS AGO, I WROTE: "YOU can never put Frank Evaristo down." Today, he celebrates a milestone—he turns 65! To make the celebration doubly special, all his five children are around to observe it with him.

Frank is the dynamic president of Alay-Lakad Foundation. He continues to support Don Bosco's out-of-school youths and street children.

Masteral studies

He is proud of his children: Franklin Jr., the eldest, is now president of Belagio Land; Caroline completed her masteral studies in International Economics and Management in Italy, and is the general manager of the family-owned Collectiones New York boutique at Glorietta 3;

Amy has a humanities degree from De La Salle University, and is the president of Egroup Property Holdings; Lorraine has a bachelor's degree in business management from DLSU College of Saint Benilde, and is currently a manager at Collier's International;

Carlo finished hotel, restaurant and institutional management at La Salle. He is a society journalist, fashion stylist and events organizer.

The women of Media Bulong-Pulong toast and cheer you on your special day, Frank. Happy birthday, old boy!

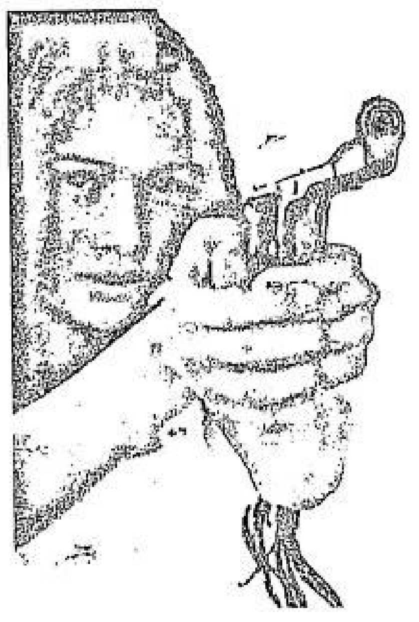
* * *

Join the four-day Mandy Navasero Batanes Photo Safari on Holy Week 2007, with special assistance from Asian Spirit and Batanes Seaside. Open till Jan. 15.

E-mail mandynavasero@yahoo.com.ph, or call 899-1767.

EVARISTO (CENTER, WITH FAMILY). The dynamic dad celebrates a milestone.

Ilarde fuses action and horror



CLARETE. Exceedingly honest actress.

By Rica Arevalo

RICO MARIA ILARDE IS KNOWN for the science-fiction 1989 thriller, "Z-Man"—a low-budget, 35mm film with an all-Filipino cast and English dialogue. The movie was sold to Overseas/First Look Pictures.

Ilarde has also directed features for Regal Films: "Dugo ng Birhen," "Babaeng Putik," and the "Aquarium" episode of 2005's "Shake, Rattle and Roll." He's back with the indie action-thriller, "Sa Ilalim ng Cogon."

Influences

Rico started his career directing action scenes for his father's (Eddie Ilarde) TV drama anthology, "Kahapon Lamang." He shares: "My influences are many—Don Siegel's 'Dirty Harry' made a big impression on me as a kid—it was very exciting and visceral. Steven Spielberg's 'Jaws' was an incredible movie—in my book, a near-perfect film."

Known for being a hard worker, Rico's outlook on life firmed up when he was merely a kid. He shares: "I used to be an athlete—a pole vaulter—in high school, so I understand the value of working your butt off. I've done stunts for my lead actors, I would even act like a woman just to get my point across to an actress." *(Laughs)*

Gunplay and cinematic violence are again on full display in his latest movie. He confesses: "Regardless of how you react to the picture, I guarantee you've never seen anything like it. Hopefully, the audience will root for the main character, Sam (Yul Servo), and accompany him on his strange but wonderful journey. And I also hope that people would

ILARDE/H4

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THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY Gateway CinePlex*10 DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

SPIRIT TRAP 1:40 / 3:40 / 5:40 / 7:40 / 9:40	TENACIOUS 'D' 12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30	SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30	Gold Platinum Cinema
THE NATIVITY 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30	REYNA 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 A GOOD YEAR 7:10 / 9:40	HAPPY FEET 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:3	
ALL THE KING'S MEN 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	CASINO ROYALE 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	INANG YAYA 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	ALL THE KING'S MEN 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

AIMALL 5

SPIRIT TRAP 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20	CASINO ROYALE 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30	TENACIOUS 'D' 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD 12:05 R3 / 1:35 / 3:45 / 5:55 / 8:05	KAMASUTRA 3 12:10 / 2:10 / 4:10 / 6:10 / 8:10	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2	2 HAPPY FEET	3 SPIRIT TRAP	4 REYNA
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE	2 TENACIOUS D	3 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 ALL THE KING'S MEN	5 A GOOD YEAR	6 HAPPY FEET	7 THE NATIVITY
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 TENACIOUS D	2 HAPPY FEET		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX A GOOD YEAR GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 THE NATIVITY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 TENACIOUS D GUARANTEED SEATS	5 LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 A GOOD YEAR		
	3 THE NATIVITY	4 SPIRIT TRAP	5 TENACIOUS D	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DECK THE HALLS	2 MEE-SHEE	3 FRAGILE	4 HAPPY FEET
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 HAPPY FEET	2 A GOOD YEAR		
	3 THE NATIVITY	4 SPIRIT TRAP	5 TENACIOUS D	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

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Paskong K.O. December 14 to 15, 2006	Anson Exhibit December 11 to 22, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Christmas Carols w/ One World String Orchestra December 16, 2006	Christmas Goodies Bazaar December 11 to 15, 2006

GREENBELT — Holiday Harmonies with the Philippine Madrigal Singers
December 2, 9 & 23, 2006

Greenbelt Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents SOUND OF MUSIC
at REP's Globe Theater - November 11 to December 17, 2006
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM — Watch RILES: LIFE ON THE TRACKS.
A documentary by acclaimed Filipino director Ditsi Carolino
December 15, 2006 / 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Ayala Malls CINEMAS

Stargazing at the Glorietta 4 PARK

featuring the stars of
ENTENG KABISOTE 3
&
MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

December 17, 2006 Sunday
5:00 PM - Glorietta 4 Park

Reserved seats for the first 200 moviegoers who will present any movie tickets purchased in any Ayala Malls Cinemas on Dec. 17, 2006.

VIC SOTTO
KRISTINE HERMOSA
Enteng Kabisote 3
OKAY KA FAIRY KO...
RICA PERALEJO
ANGELICA PANGANIBAN
GRETCHEN BARRETTO
TANYA GARCIA
BIANCA KING
ANA CAPRI
MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

The movies Enteng Kabisote 3 & Matakot Ka Sa Karma opens Dec. 25 at Ayala Malls Cinemas

glorietta

Ayala Malls

Holiday Harmonies
WITH THE PHILIPPINE MADRIGAL SINGERS

SATURDAYS OF DECEMBER
7-8 PM

DECEMBER 2 (GREENBELT 3 PARK)
DECEMBER 9 (GREENBELT 3 PARK)
DECEMBER 16 (GREENBELT 3 2ND FLOOR FOUNTAIN AREA)
DECEMBER 23 (GREENBELT 3 PARK)

GREENBELT

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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9116

1 CASINO ROYALE • THX
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

2 HAPPY FEET
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 SA ILALIM NG COGON
12:00 1:50 3:40 5:30 7:20 9:10

4 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

5 TENACIOUS D
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

6 SPIRIT TRAP
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 THE NATIVITY STORY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 REYNA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 BORAT 12:30 2:35
A GOOD YEAR 5:00 7:30 10.00

10 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:00 2.00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 TENACIOUS D 12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

2 REYNA 12:00 1:50 3:40
THE NATIVITY STORY 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 HAPPY FEET
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9.50

4 CASINO ROYALE
11:00 1:40 4:20 7:00 9:50

5 SPIRIT TRAP
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6 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
12:35 2.50 5:05 7:25 9:50

7 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

METRO EAST 682-6193/682-6190

1 REYNA
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 HAPPY FEET
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10

4 THE NATIVITY STORY
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5 TENACIOUS D
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6 KAMA SUTRA 3
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7 CASINO ROYALE
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

8 SPIRIT TRAP
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

NOVALICHES 935-3217/935-3229-30

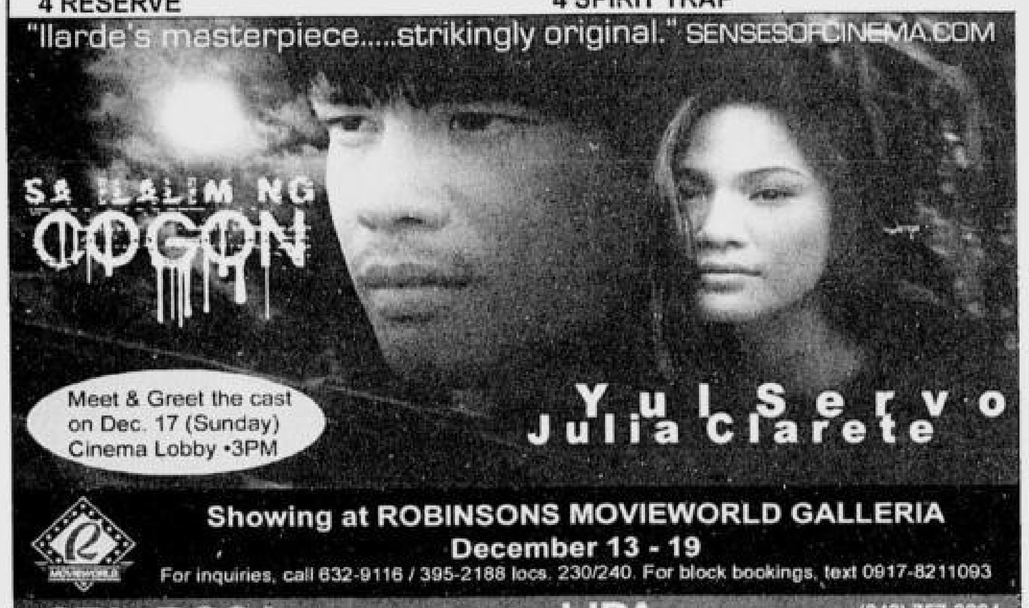
1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
4 REYNA

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2578

1 MAKAMUNDO
2 REYNA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 TENACIOUS D
2 HAPPY FEET
3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
4 SPIRIT TRAP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1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 SANTA CLAUSE 3
3 MY FIRST WEDDING
4 DECK THE HALLS

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2 THE RETURN
3 SANTA CLAUSE 3
4 STEP UP

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1 FEAST
2 ANG PAMANA:THE INHERITANCE
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 HAPPY FEET

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE MARINE
2 ZU WARRIORS
3 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
4 MEE-SHEE

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2 DECK THE HALLS
3 FEAST
4 REYNA

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1 HAPPY FEET
2 MEE-SHEE
3 REYNA
4 THE RETURN
5 FRAGILE
6 THE MARINE

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2 ZU WARRIORS
3 HAPPY FEET
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 SANTA CLAUSE 3
6 REYNA

ILOILO (033) 338-8070

1 FRAGILE
2 THE NATIVITY STORY
3 HAPPY FEET
4 REYNA

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4 CASINO ROYAL 007/A GOOD YEAR
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1 CASINO ROYAL 007
2 HAPPY FEET
3 THE NATIVITY STORY
4 SPIRIT TRAP

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(Mandaluyong) tel. 7260150
3 SHAOLIN VS, EEVILDEAD - 2
4 SPIRIT TRAP
5 RESERVED

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(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 KAMASUTRA - 3
3 ZU WARRIOR
4 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

THEATRES
1 CASINO ROYAL 007
2 ANG PAMANA
3 FLAG OF OUR FATHER

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-52
THE MARINE
TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
RESRVED
RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 TENACIOUS - D
2 THE NATIVITY STORY
3 SHAOLIN VS, EEVILDEAD - 2
4 HAPPY FEET
5 SPIRIT TRAP
6 CASINO ROYAL 007
7 INANG YAYA
8 REYNA
9 KAMASUTRA - 3
10 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 THE NATIVITY
2 THE RETURN
3 HAPPY FEET
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 SHAOLIN 2 VS, EVIL DEAD
2 TENACIOUS - D
3 MAKAMUNDO
4 THE RETURN
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FLAG OF OUR FATHER
2 THE BANQUET
3 MAKAMUNDO
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 SHAOLIN 2 VS. EVIL DEAD
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 KAMAZUTRA

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 ANG PAMANA
2 PITONG DALAGITA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 THE MARINE
4 INANG YAYA

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 THE MARINE
2 PITONG DALAGITA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 TENACIOUS D
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYAL
4 A GOOD YEAR

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 FEAST
2 THE MARINE / DECK THE HALLS
3 FLAG OF OUR FATHER
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 FLAG OF OUR FATHER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 BARANG
2 INANG YAYA
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
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2 THE RETURN
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 BORAT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 HAPPY FEET
2 ANG PAMANA
FLAG OF OUR FATHER / THE MARINE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 INANG YAYA

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 FLAG OF OUR FATHERS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
2 MAKAMUNDO
3 PARAISO SA GUBAT
4 THE COVENANT

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 FEAST
2 DARK DANCERS
3 FLAG OF OUR FATHERS
4 MAKAMUNDO
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 HAPPY FEET
3 THE RETURN
4 STEP UP

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 SNAKE ON THE PLANE

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Ilarde fuses action . . .

From page H3

fall in love with Katia (Julia Clarete). Julia's ability to strip herself emotionally is something to behold."

Funding

Why did he choose Robinson's Galleria's Indiesine (where the movie is showing until Dec. 19) as the only screening venue for his film? He confesses: "Producers Mammu Chua, Roger Garcia and I wanted a wide release for 'Cogon,' but we couldn't come up with the necessary funding—it's terribly expensive!

"But, we want the industry and the moviegoing public to see the film. And we want to contribute to the indie filmmaking community *via* the Independent Filmmakers Cooperative (IFC). I hope the production will help debunk the general perception that indie films are inferior to mainstream pictures."

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TENACIOUS D	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
HAPPY FEET	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 G
CASINO ROYALE	1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:40 PG 13
A GOOD YEAR	2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:00 PG 13

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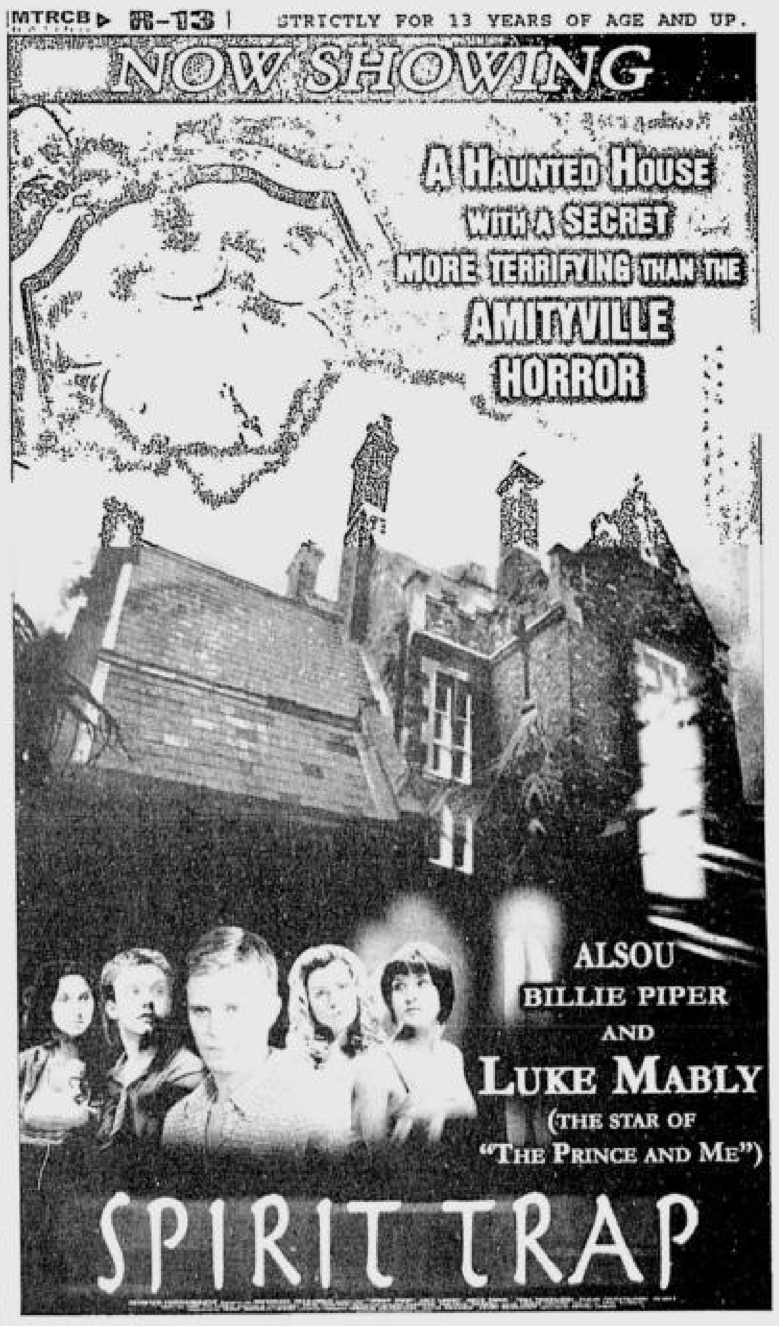
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AND
LUKE MABLY
(THE STAR OF "THE PRINCE AND ME")
SPIRIT TRAP

MTRCB GP GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

SHOWN AT THE VATICAN AND WAS APPLAUDED SIX TIMES DURING THE SCREENING.

"I'm not an emotional person, but when I finished watching it ... **THE TEARS CAME DOWN MY CHEEK. I COULDN'T SPEAK.**"
Anne Graham Lotz
~NEWSWEEK Magazine

"**A DIVINE LOVE STORY** comparable to those tearjerkers penned by NICOLAS SPARKS and ERICH SEGAL."
Nancy Rose
~VANITY FAIR Magazine

NEW LINE CINEMA presents
THE NATIVITY STORY
2ND WEEK

Amarela vivifies the best in Bohol's cultural, scenic and historic delights

From page H6

Dauis' cultural and economic life, so Boholanos and other people supportive of heritage initiatives are urged to contribute to the fund by calling Fr. Pinlac at 038-5022008, or e-mailing valupin@hotmail.com.

Initiatives

When we returned to Amarela, we regaled Doy Nunag with the day's exceedingly varied activities, and he shared that he was fully in support of Dauis' heritage initiatives.

Being an art lover since his youth, he had conceptualized Amarela precisely to showcase, not just the best in tourism, but also the finest in Boholano culture and arts.

In so doing, he sought to help instill in the Boholano a renewed pride of place and self, completely in keeping with the province's efforts to be known, not just for its signature Chocolate Hills and tarsiers, but also for its artistic wonders.

In Doy's view, heritage is not a thing of the past, but is redefined and deepened by successive generations. Thus, Amarela's "cocoon" of antiques and art pieces are given a new context by the recently opened resort itself, with its Mediterranean look *and* Filipino essence.

For her part, his daughter, Bianca, was optimistic that the resort's unique blend of the old and the new would attract, not just well-heeled seniors, but also families and young travelers in search of something different.

More colorful

Indeed, during our stay at Amarela, the resort's ambience was made livelier and more colorful by the laughter of children and teenagers having themselves a whale of a good time with their elders.

And, aside from the resort's own attractions, visitors could head by boat to any number of celebrated diving sites nearby, or to engage in a playful race with dolphins, or visit other resorts and attractions.

One night, in fact, Doy and Bianca took us to the Bohol Bee Farm. When we remarked that it was a bit "unusual" for a resort owner to expose us to his "competition," Doy laughed and said that wasn't how they thought and behaved in Bohol.

The effort to boost tourism and culture in the province was a communal initiative, and one resort's gain would eventually also redound to its neighbors' advantage.

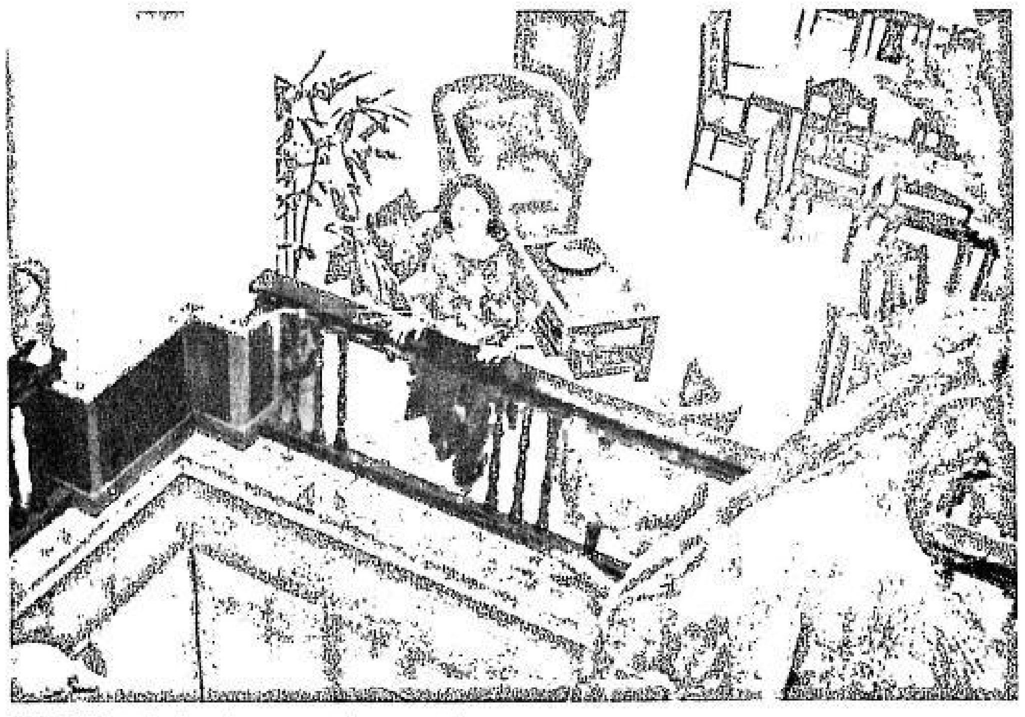
Creative tourism

Bianca seconded the motion, sharing that, as a young graduate with Boholano roots, she too was committed to boosting the province's economic and artistic prospects by way of creative tourism.

This commitment and fervor shared by two generations bodes well indeed for Bohol and its rediscovery as one of the country's richest and most diverse travel destinations, with much more than sightseeing going for it.

Talk about the art of travel and living: Amarela, Panglao and Bohol show the way for the rest of the country!

(Visit www.amarelaresort.com, or email reservations@amarelaresort.com)



BIANCA at the boutique resort's cozy atrium.

ANTIQUES, books and art pieces surround guests with their unique "cocoon" of sense and sensibility.

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SA ILALIM NG OOGON
Yul Servo
Julia Clarete
a film by Rico Maria Ilarde
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CASINO ROYALE 007 PG13 1:05,4:00,6:55,9:50	HAPPY FEET G 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10	A GOOD YEAR PG13 2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00
TENACIOUS D IN: THE PICK OF DESTINY 1:50,4:00,6:10,8:20	SPIRIT TRAP R13 1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15	THE NATIVITY STORY PG13 1:20,3:30,5:40,7:50,10:00

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SHANG CINEPLEX
① TENACIOUS D
MTRCB R-13
12.40, 3.00, 5.20, 7.40, 10.00
② THE NATIVITY
MTRCB GP
1.20, 3.30, 5.40, 7.50, 10.00
③ HAPPY FEET
MTRCB GP
12.05, 2.30, 5.00, 7:30, 10:00
④ CASINO ROYALE
MTRCB PG 13 1.25 7.00
A GOOD YEAR
MTRCB PG-13 4.30, 10.00
PREMIERE THEATRE
THE PRODUCERS / RENT
MTRCB PG-13 12.45, 6.15
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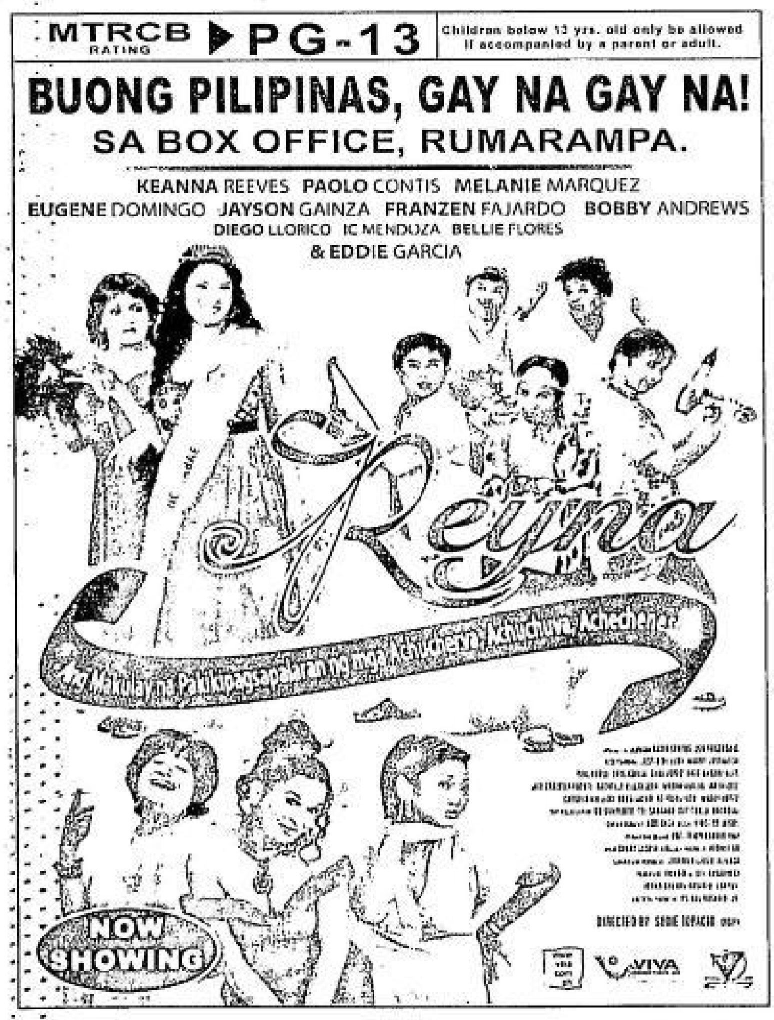

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6:40, 9:00 PG-13
CINEMA 2 A GOOD YEAR
12:00, 2:30, 5:00,
7:30, 10:00 PG-13
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX
PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 DECK THE HALLS //THE NATIVITY
11:40, 1:50, 4:00,
//6:00, 8:20, 10:35 GP
CINEMA 4 TENACIOUS D
11:20, 1:35, 3:50,
6:05, 8:20, 10:35 PG13
CINEMA 5 HAPPY FEET
11:00, 1:15, 3:35,
5:55, 8:15, 10:55 GP
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

DEC 16, 2006	Nyoy Volante	9:00 PM
DEC 28, 2006	Truefaith, Mojofly, Guji Florenza	8:30 PM

TIAMPINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
DEC 13, 2006	CERRUDO, CLASSICO	8:00 PM
	FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116	

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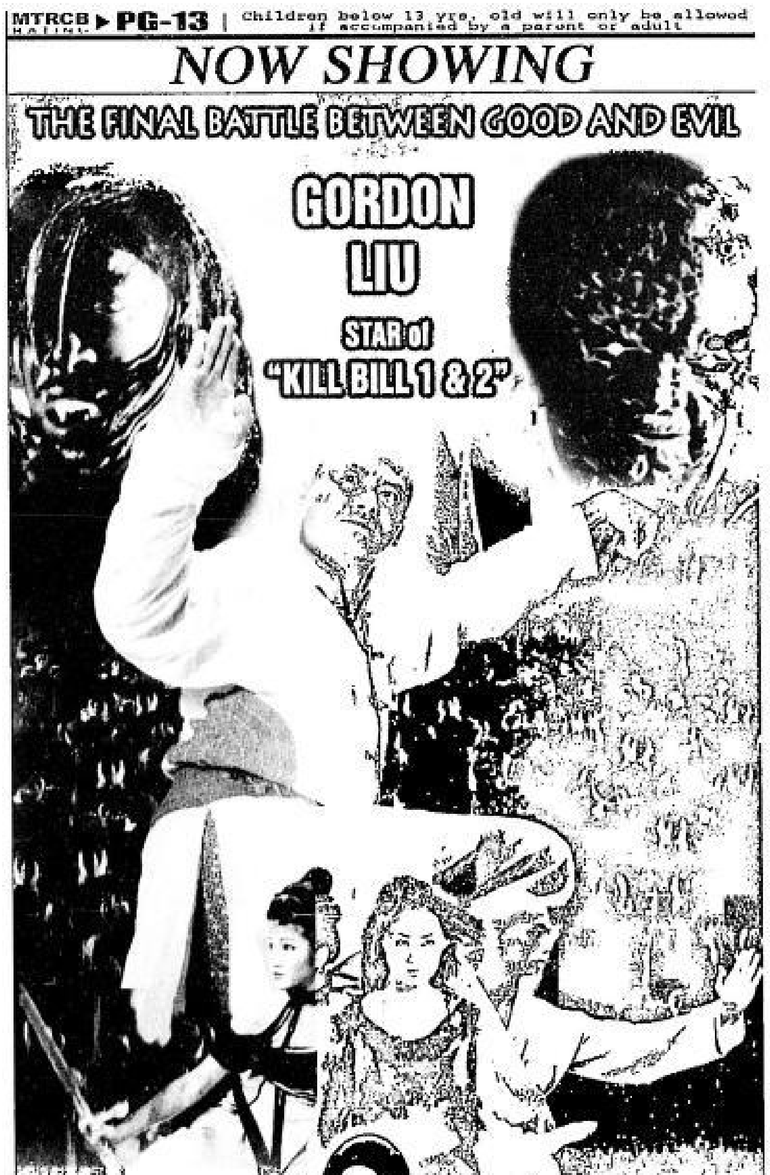

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STAR of "KILL BILL 1 & 2"
SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD 2

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~PETE HAMMOND, MAXIM
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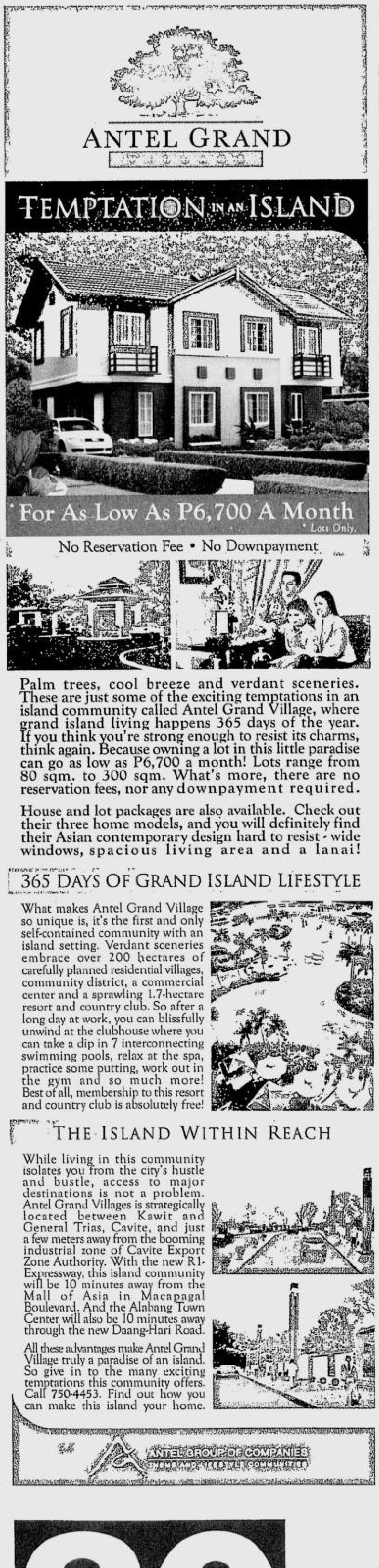
JACK BLACK
(THE STAR OF "KING KONG")
KYLE GASS
TENACIOUS D
THE PICK OF DESTINY



ANTEL GRAND VILLAGE

TEMPTATION IN AN ISLAND

*For As Low As P6,700 A Month
* Lots Only.

No Reservation Fee • No Downpayment

Palm trees, cool breeze and verdant sceneries. These are just some of the exciting temptations in an island community called Antel Grand Village, where grand island living happens 365 days of the year. If you think you're strong enough to resist its charms, think again. Because owning a lot in this little paradise can go as low as P6,700 a month! Lots range from 80 sqm. to 300 sqm. What's more, there are no reservation fees, nor any downpayment required.

House and lot packages are also available. Check out their three home models, and you will definitely find their Asian contemporary design hard to resist - wide windows, spacious living area and a lanai!

365 DAYS OF GRAND ISLAND LIFESTYLE

What makes Antel Grand Village so unique is, it's the first and only self-contained community with an island setting. Verdant sceneries embrace over 200 hectares of carefully planned residential villages, community district, a commercial center and a sprawling 1.7-hectare resort and country club. So after a long day at work, you can blissfully unwind at the clubhouse where you can take a dip in 7 interconnecting swimming pools, relax at the spa, practice some putting, work out in the gym and so much more! Best of all, membership to this resort and country club is absolutely free!

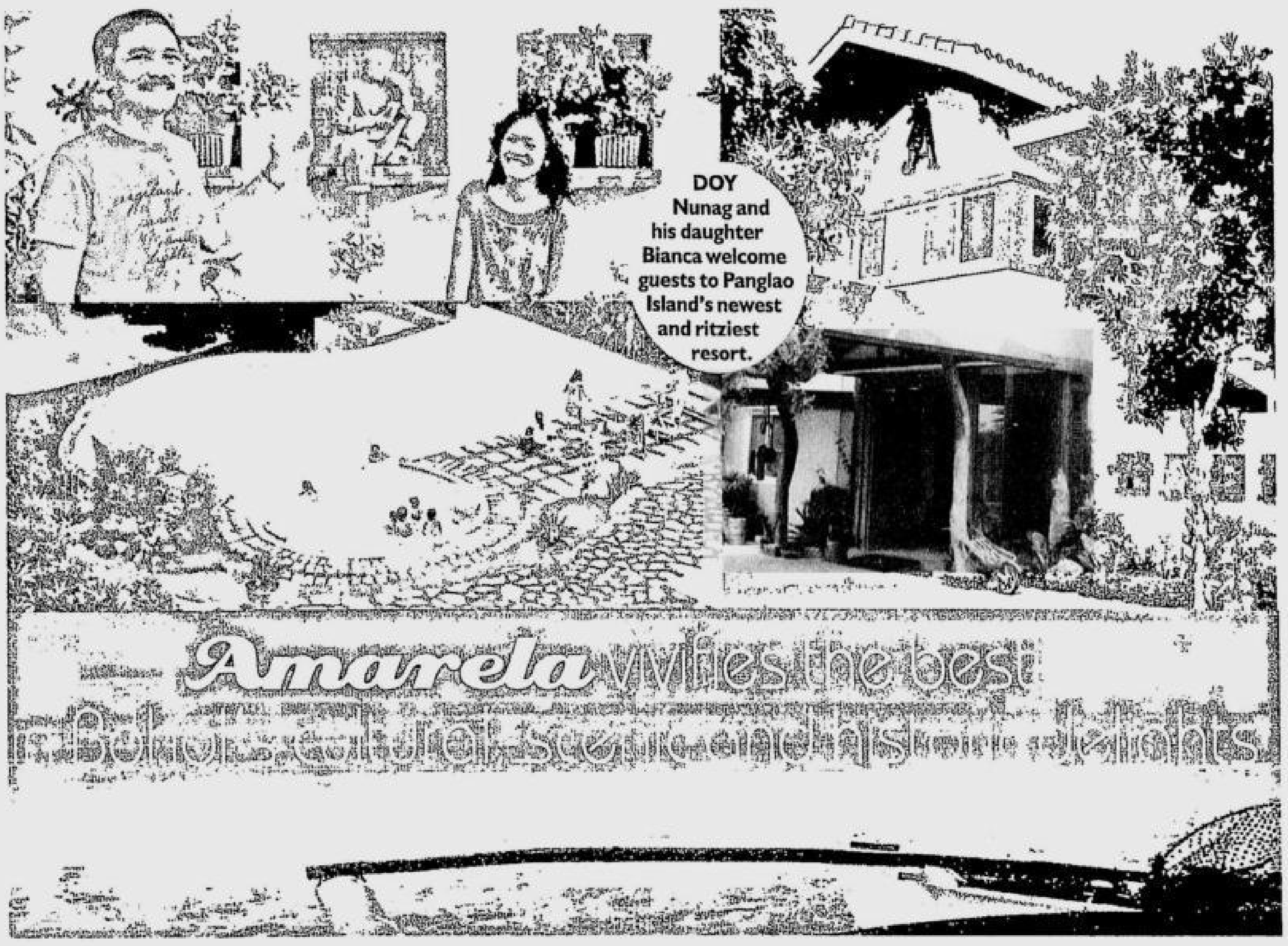
THE ISLAND WITHIN REACH

While living in this community isolates you from the city's hustle and bustle, access to major destinations is not a problem. Antel Grand Villages is strategically located between Kawit and General Trias, Cavite, and just a few meters away from the booming industrial zone of Cavite Export Zone Authority. With the new R1-Expressway, this island community will be 10 minutes away from the Mall of Asia in Macapagal Boulevard. And the Alabang Town Center will also be 10 minutes away through the new Daang-Hari Road.

All these advantages make Antel Grand Village truly a paradise of an island. So give in to the many exciting temptations this community offers. Call 750-4453. Find out how you can make this island your home.

ANTEL GROUP OF COMPANIES

Amarela vivifies the best in Bohol's cultural, scenic and historic delights



DOY Nunag and his daughter Bianca welcome guests to Panglao Island's newest and ritziest resort.

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR YEARS NOW, WE HAVE been yearning to savor the scenic, cultural and historical delights of Bohol, especially after hearing the rave reviews of well-traveled friends, like Susan Calo-Medina.

"You must experience Bohol's churches, beaches, laid-back hospitality and genuinely hospitable people," Susan kept urging us. She should know, because she's been hosting and producing the TV show, "Travel Time," for more than 20 years, right?

Invitation

Fortuitously, earlier this month, we received an invitation to visit Bohol from Doy Nunag, the owner of the new Amarela boutique resort on the province's scenic Panglao Island (tel. 038 502 9497-98, telefax 038 502 9499).

We accepted the invitation with alacrity, and prepared ourselves to finally experience fabled Bohol, where the best of nature, culture, adventure and epicure converge.

Upon arriving at Amarela after a leisurely half-hour car trip from Tagbilaran City, however, we became so enamored of the resort that we decided to savor its attractions first and foremost.

We've been to our share of high-end resorts both here and abroad, but Amarela strummed a special chord in our psyche because of its unique combination of scenic and design attractions, natural and easygoing lifestyle, artistic and cultural delights, and fine and inventive cuisine.

Hospitality

Even better, Doy Nunag and his lovely daughter, Bianca, set the pace for leisurely enjoyment of the best things in life with their genuine hospitality and friendship. They really wanted us to have a memorable time experiencing the best that Amarela, Panglao and Bohol had to offer.

Amarela may be a high-end, resort enjoyed by socialites and international jetsetters, but it wears its wonders casually on its sleeve.

A day in one of the cozy resort's 24 rooms and suites starts as simply—and as spectacularly—as the sunrise that insinuates itself through the window, then floods your room with its golden haze. After breakfast, take a dip in the sea or the resort's pool, laze the time away on the balcony with a good book, and view Amarela's collection of paintings and antiques—

That last attraction is what makes Amarela one-of-a-kind. Aside from treating visitors like honored guests and friends, it also showcases Bohol's cultural and artistic splendors.

But, the effect is not like going to a museum. Rather, the Nunag family's books, antiques and art pieces are to be enjoyed and used, and subliminally surround you with a palpable love for beauty and tradition that elevates the travel experience to a total immersion of sense and sensibility.

Ambiance

After a day and night of enjoying Amarela's attractions, ambiance and cuisine, we were ready to savor the rest that Panglao and Bohol had to offer.

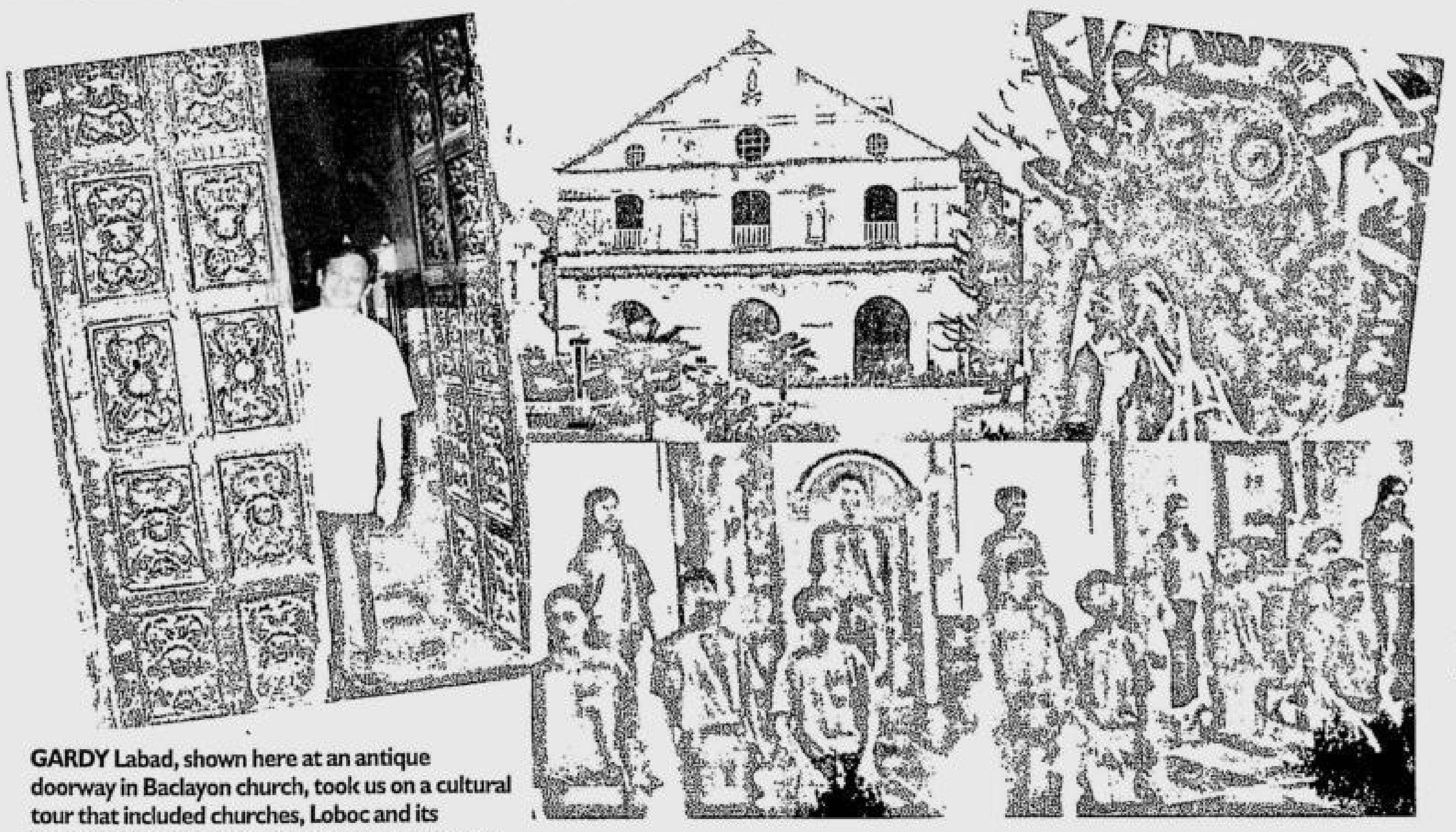
With the special assistance of Bohol cultural maven Gardy Labad, we discovered why Bohol has meant so much, not just to its residents, but also to the fortunate people who have visited its shores.

Gardy and his sister-in-law, Elba, took us on a personalized tour that focused on the province's beautiful and historic churches in the towns of Baclayon, Dauis and Loboc, and culminated in a "command performance" of the celebrated and internationally acclaimed Loboc Children's Choir, of which Gardy is the artistic director!

That evening, we had dinner with Dauis' parish priest, Fr. Valentino Pinlac, who appraised us of the efforts of parish and cultural leaders to revive the locality's traditional arts and crafts by way of the Dauis Heritage Fund.

The far-sighted plan should have a major positive effect on

AMARELA/ H5



GARDY Labad, shown here at an antique doorway in Baclayon church, took us on a cultural tour that included churches, Loboc and its famous children's choir, the tarsier sanctuary, etc.

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Tyra . . .

From page H1

significant and astute.

Thus has the former supermodel sought to carve her own niche on TV—not as Oprah's younger clone, but as her own, edgier person.

For her part, Oprah has decided to relax a bit, give her major causes a rest, and focus on interviewing celebrities on the "premium, primetime" edition of her show. Some relentless do-gooders and world-changers may find this period disappointing, but we say that the overachieving TV host deserves to take it easy now and then.

Give her a break, why don't we? If memory serves, the shift should be temporary, and Ms Winfrey should be jousting with windmills once more in no time at all!

SATURDAY Special

Theatricality and absurdity collide in the 'The Black Parade'

By Noelani Torre

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE. Tongue-in-cheek fun.

THE FIRST TRACK IN MY Chemical Romance's third album, "The Black Parade," is titled "The End." The next one is called "Dead!" The one after that is "This is How I Disappear." This goes on in the same vein, up to the last track, "Famous Last Words."

If you still can't figure out the record's main theme, maybe the skeleton holding a baton and clad in a marching band outfit on the CD cover will clue you in!

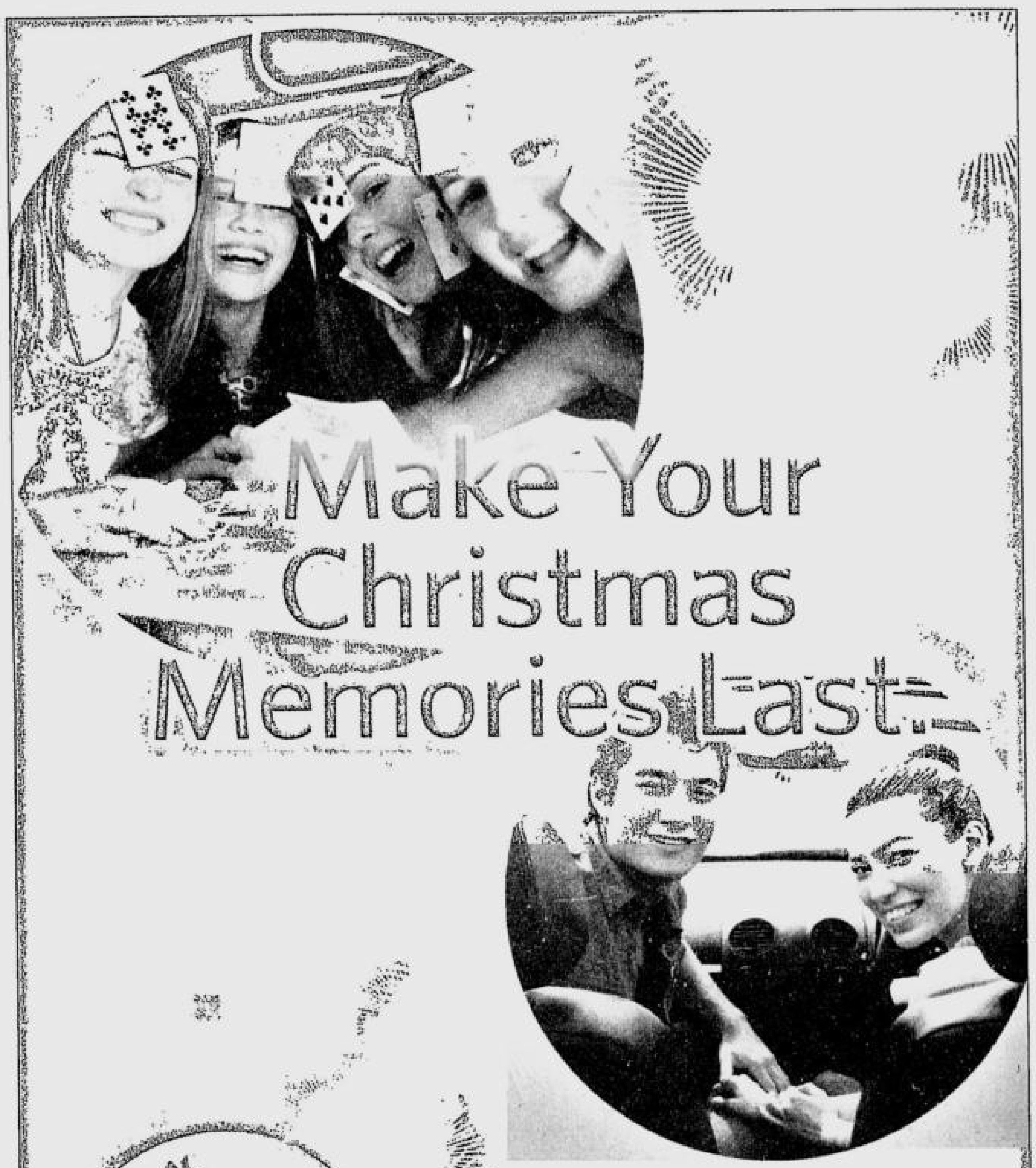
Most popular

Mortality, the second most popular songwriting subject after love, has long been a favorite topic of this New Jersey-based quintet. In their latest collection, however, they don't just sing (and scream) about it. The pop-punk quintet who broke into the scene just a few years ago have gone ambitious on us: Their newest release, they say, is a "concept album."

Since they're classified as punk, comparisons between this album and Green Day's own Grammy-winning "American Idiot" are inevitable. There's also the fact that, like "Idiot," "The Black Parade" was co-produced by Rob Cavallo—and that Way *does* sound a bit like Billie Joe Armstrong.

Then again, depending on the song they're singing, the entire

THEATRICALITY/12



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Camp Kilpatrick is considered home to hopeless juvenile delinquents before they incarcerate to the California Youth Authority.

Probation officer Sean Porter (Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson), a top football player back in his high school days, is finding ways to put direction to the lives of these youngsters. Together with fellow officer Malcolm Moore (Xzibit), Porter starts his mission by forming a football team: the Camp Kilpatrick Mustangs.

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T-REX IN 3D
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1 CASINO ROYALE
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
4 TENACIOUS D
5 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING
6 BARCELONA
PREMIERE CINEMA
THE RETURN/
THE NATIVITY
CENTERSTAGE
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A GOOD YEAR
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2 BARCELONA
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET
5 THE NATIVITY
6 TENACIOUS D
7 HAPPY FEET
8 SPIRIT TRAP
9 WAG KANG LILINGON
10 REYNA
11 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
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10 WAG KANG LILINGON
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7 CASINO ROYALE
8 HAPPY FEET
9 WAG KANG LILINGON
10 SPIRIT TRAP
FRAGILE
BARCELONA

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2 HAPPY FEET
CASINO ROYALE
BARCELONA
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
THE NATIVITY
SPIRIT TRAP
REYNA
10 TENACIOUS D

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2 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
3 TENACIOUS D
4 BARCELONA
5 THE NATIVITY
6 WAG KANG LILINGON

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3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 HAPPY FEET
5 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
6 CASINO ROYALE
7 REYNA
8 WAG KANG LILINGON
9 BARCELONA

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
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2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 REYNA
4 THE NATIVITY

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3 THE NATIVITY
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8 BARCELONA
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Theatricality and absurdity collide in the 'The Black Parade'

From page 11

band manages to sound like other musicians you've heard over the years—among them Queen, The Doors, David Bowie, The Who and Iron Maiden.

If that sounds crazy, well, *they* are—but, in an inspired way. Play the album in your CD player, and you'll be introduced to the beeping heartbeat of the dying cancer patient, who is this album's lead character.

By the time "Dead!" rolls in, the poor guy has flat-lined. That he didn't even last until the second song is no cause for mourning, however, because this entire album is just so, well, fun!

Yes, indeed—death, misery and disenchantment can be great fun. Just listen to the delirious five-minute-long title track with its quiet intro—keyboards and Way's sharp, bright voice—that segues into a full soaring choir, complete with guitars and marching band drums.

THE POP-PUNK quintet sings about death and misery.

Pitch

The pitch will get even higher as the song progresses, as Way goes all anthemic with the irresistibly catchy "We'll carry on" refrain.

It's ostentatious, over the top, full of itself—and perfectly, absurdly delicious! Watch the equally flamboyant video and you'll be in stitches.

In the Broadway-sounding "Mama," Liza Minnelli makes an appearance (only two lines, you have to watch out for it). That her presence doesn't come as a surprise says something about the nature of this album.

Project

There's something theatrical, and almost vaudevillian, about the entire project. Another number, "Teenagers," though not really sounding like a part of the album's concept, sounds like it can be a musical number complete with cane-twirling gestures and enthusiastic back-up dancers.

Beware of its chorus, though. It'll stick in your head and will let itself be heard at the most inappropriate moments.

"The Black Parade" doesn't have great lyrics (i.e. "You can watch me corrode like a beast in repose"), but it has a beating heart under all that tongue-in-cheek absurdity and well-orchestrated sonic swaggering. It's completely insane—and enjoyable!

Cheloy's shawls ...

From page 14

sincerity and, of course, proximity of age.

Special place

Years later, I stayed with Joe Pradera in London and, it turned out, Cheloy was his classmate, too, along with the esteemed Juvenal Sanso. Therefore, Cheloy has always maintained a special place in my heart.

A couple of months ago, the UP Alumni Association was thinking up fundraising projects for the UP Carillon, which needs restoration and improvement. A committee was formed to tap the university's alumni, both here and abroad.

How about T-shirts for smaller donors? I recommended: T-shirts with reprints of the paintings of UP's National Artists for Visual Arts (like Joya and Ben Cabrera). Certainly, those prolific painters would have an interpretation of the Diliman landmark. I suggested they ask National Artists for Literature, Bien Lumbera and Rio Alma, for stanzas of their poems to be printed on the backs of shirts.

Then, for the ladies, why not shawls? I recommended the *callado* paintings of dear Cheloy. After all, Nini Jorge of the UPAA Finance Committee is a friend of Cheloy. The generous artist would never say no to a UP cause—much more for the historic UP Carillon. So, Cheloy was approached, and the response was positive.

Preparations

Nini and Ching Evangelista of the Carillon Project immediately made the preparations to ensure that the unique shawl would be ready in time for the UP Madrigal Singers' concert, "Kampana... Pagbabago, Pagdiriwang," to be held at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo of the Cultural Center of the Philippines at 8 p.m. tomorrow.

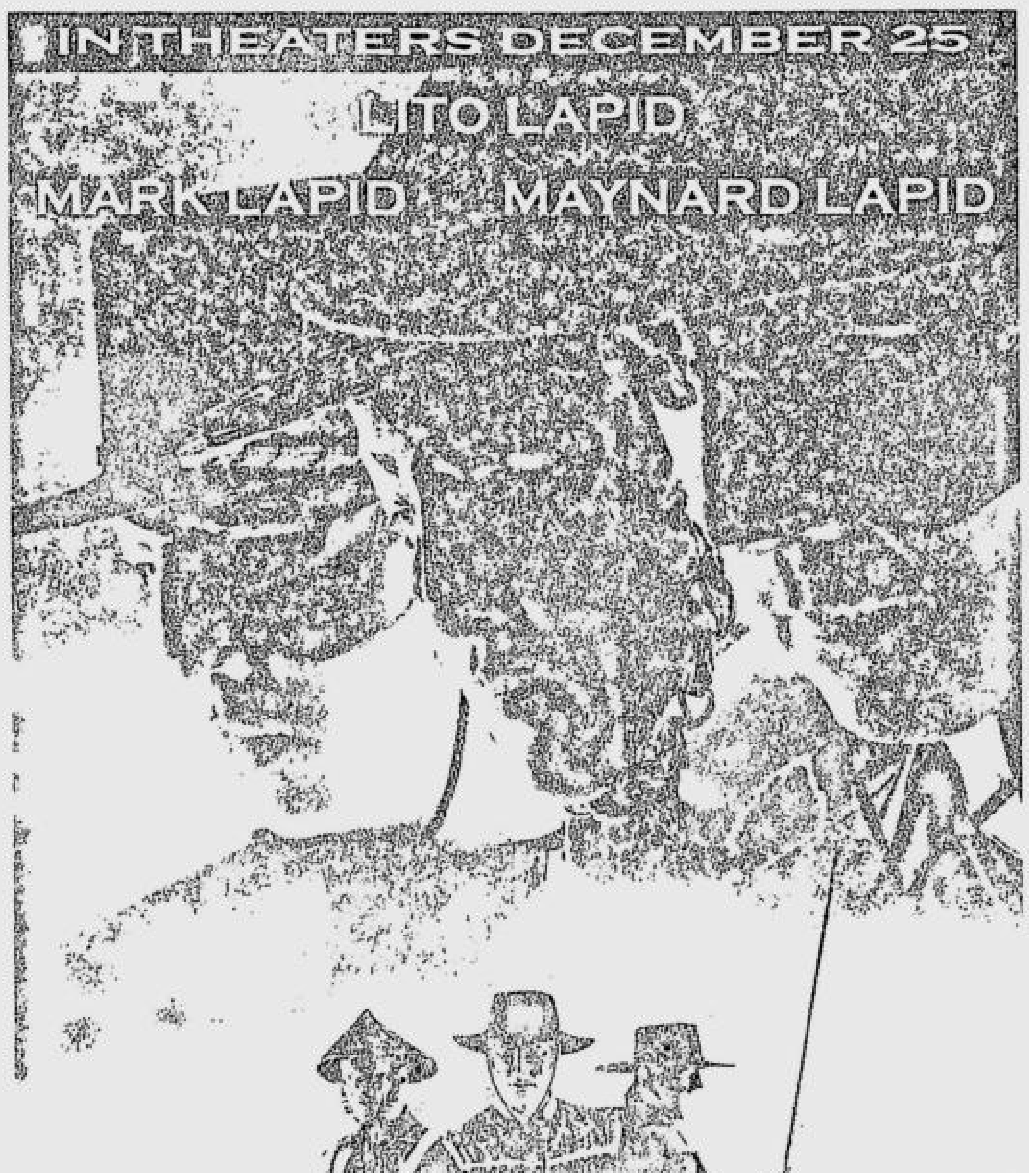
Andrea O. Veneracion, National Artist for Music, founded the Madz in 1963. Thereafter, the choir represented the country in numerous international singing contests and brought home prestigious awards—including the 35th Florilege Vocal de Tours in France.

Retirement

Upon her retirement, Veneracion personally selected Mark Anthony Carpio to take over the helm of the Philippines' foremost singing ensemble.

"Kampana" is a culminating social event for the UP alumni this year. Expect well-dressed women to accent their lovely gowns with Cheloy Dans' shawls.

Naturally, for Cheloy fans like me, the event foreshadows the declaration of Dans as the next National Artist for Visual Arts.



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X'MAS SALE AT MANO MANO UNTIL JAN. 6

MONTAGE

MANO MANO, SAFRUDI'S UNIQUE SHOWcase of Philippine handicrafts, has a special sale of its finest products, ongoing until Jan. 6. Mano Mano (tel. 632 564-4169, 561-0395) is at 2594 Lamayan St., Sta. Ana, near the Sta. Ana Church.

Hallmark's Christmas movie marathon

Hallmark Channel warms viewers' hearts with these yuletide treats: "The Christmas Shoes" at 9 p.m. on Dec. 24, with replays on Dec. 25 at 2 a.m., 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., and Dec. 26 at 4 a.m. Rob Lowe plays a money-driven lawyer who meets a boy who needs money to buy his mother the most beautiful pair of shoes.

In "Midsomer Murders: Ghost of Christmas Past" (Dec. 24 at 11 p.m.), a double murder involving a prominent family forces investigator John Barnaby to put his holiday plans on hold.

In the Charles Dickens classic, "A Christmas Carol," Patrick Stewart plays the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, who is visited by ghosts who show him the error of his ways.

Other treats: "The Christmas Box" (Dec. 25 at 8 a.m and 2 p.m.). "Angel of Pennsylvania" (Dec. 25 at 6 a.m.) "Picking Up and Dropping Off" (Dec. 25 at 4 p.m.). "Off Season" (Dec. 25 at 6 p.m. and 12 midnight). "Fallen Angel" (Dec. 25 at 10 p.m.).

'Let's Just Play'

It was truly a "kids' day out" as thousands of Nick fans and their families gathered at the Adidas SportsKamp recently to celebrate Nickelodeon's grandest day of play.

They spent one whole afternoon actively thinking, running, playing and experiencing how it is to be a happy, fit individual through messy and healthy fun.

Presented by Milo and co-sponsored by Fly Wheels, Cetrinets and Energizer, the event gifted the first 1,000 kids with T-shirts, squirters and goodies.

The Fun Field was full of giant inflatables like the A-Dora-Ball and the Blue's Clues Obstacle Course. Kids messed about in the Sliming Pool, enjoyed themselves at the SpongeBob Anti-Stink Sink, rappelled the Kappa Mikey Flying Fox, and grooved to a dazzling performance by the Pupil band!

Yuletide compilation

Sony BMG has released its all-star Christmas album, "Let There Be Peace on Earth." Cuts include "Even Santa Fell in Love" (Lea Salonga), "Paskong Nagdaan" (Sharon Cuneta), "Sana Ngayong Pasko" (Ariel Rivera) and "Christmas Party" (Eraserheads).

'Blood Diamond' gala premiere

Leonardo DiCaprio's latest adventure drama, "Blood Diamond," will have its invitational premiere on Dec. 19 at Greenbelt 3. The critically acclaimed production recently won two awards from America's National Board of Review: Best supporting actor for Djimon Hounsou, and as one of the 10 best films of 2006.

Set in Sierra Leone, the film tells the story of an ex-mercenary (DiCaprio) and a fisherman (Hounsou) who, for different reasons, join in a quest to discover a rare pink diamond.

At Rizal Park

Today at 5 p.m., Ballet at the Park features Baile Ciudad de San Fernando, Ballet de Agoo and the Jonessa Dance Center of Dagupan City, Pangasinan.

Tomorrow at 5 p.m., Concert at the Park showcases the Pandacan Community Band, conducted by Reynato Resurreccion.

'Barcelona'

Topbilled by Alessandra de Rossi and Luis Alandy, Gil Portes' "Barcelona" is about a mysterious woman who travels to Spain's most beautiful city to search for her missing husband. In nine days, she meets Filipinos whose lives reflect her sense of loss and hope in a foreign land. The film should be viewed especially by OCWs and their loved ones.

Christmas at the Pen

At 5 p.m. today, the Peninsula Manila stages its annual "Christmas Concert at the Pen" in the hotel's lobby . The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducted by guest conductor Ruggero Barbieri. Singers are Nolyn Cabahug, Rachel Gerodias, the Philippine Children's Choir from Mandaluyong and the UP Concert Chorus.

Grand reunion

The College Editors Guild of the Philippines will have a grand reunion at 6 p.m. today at the residence of former Senator Helena Benitez (26 Mariposa St., Cubao, QC). The reunion marks the guild's 75th anniversary. Call 524-3927 or chairperson Jose Cosido at 0919 857-7170.

'Little Miss Sunshine'

"Little Miss Sunshine," currently showing at Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3, recently won three awards from the New York Film Critics: Best ensemble cast (for Steve Carell, Greg Kinnear, Toni Collette, Alan Arkin and Abigail Breslin), best debut as director (Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris), and as one of the 10 best films of 2006.

TOP performers sing in BMG's holiday album.

Movies on TV

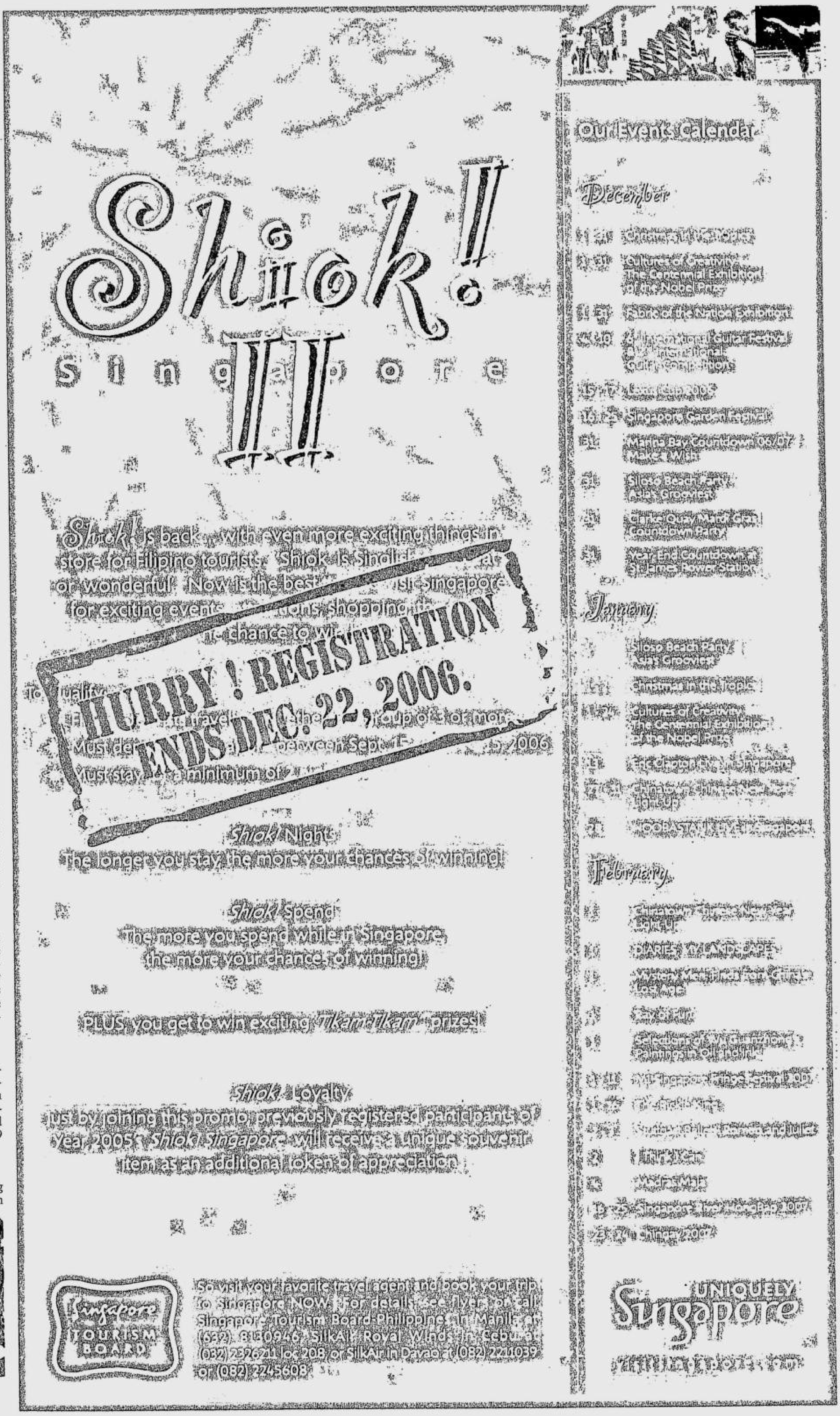
On HBO today at 6:30 a.m., "Defending Your Life." Dec. 17 at 9 p.m., "Shrek 2." Dec. 18 at 11 p.m., "Surviving Christmas." Dec. 19 at 5 p.m., "The Brooke Ellison Story." Dec. 20 at 9 p.m., "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events." Dec. 21 at 11 a.m., "Superman 3." 11 p.m., "The Postman." Dec. 22 at 9 p.m., "Christmas with the Kranks."

On Cinemax today at 5:15 p.m., "The Big Chill." Dec. 17 at 6:30 a.m., "Charade." Dec. 18 at 1:50 p.m., "War and Peace." Dec. 19 at 11:45 a.m., "A Cry in the Dark." Dec. 20 at 3 p.m., "It's A Wondeful Life." Dec. 21 at 6 a.m., "Cape Fear." Dec. 22 at 6:30 a.m., "Rio Bravo."

DICAPRIO. Topbills adventure drama, "Blood Diamond."

BRESLIN. Plays precocious tyke in "Little Miss Sunshine."

LOWE. Portrays money-driven lawyer in "The Christmas Shoes."



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Our Events Calendar

December
Cultures of Creativity: The Centennial Exhibition of the Nobel Prize
Singapore Garden Festival
Marina Bay Countdown 06/07 Make a Wish
31 Siloso Beach Party Asia's Grooviest
31 Clarke Quay Mardi Gras Countdown Party
31 Year End Countdown at St James Power Station

January
Siloso Beach Party Asia's Grooviest
Christmas in the Tropics
Cultures of Creativity: The Centennial Exhibition of the Nobel Prize
HOOBASTANK LIVE in Singapore

February
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Cheloy's shawls provide warmth for lucky women this X'mas

UP STUDENT Joanna Romualdo dons the Dans-designed shawl in "Kampana."

By Behn Cervantes

IT WAS FROM CELIA DIAZ-LAUREL AND Pitoy Moreno (my classmates at UP) after the Pacific war that I first heard about their very amiable contemporary, Araceli Limcaco-Dans.

Soon after they declared that she was delightfully pretty, they would immediately heap praises on her for her skill as an artist!

Educator

She was also an exemplary art educator who had been cited by educational institutions, as well as former students like Anton Juan and Noel Mallonga, for her dedication and style of teaching. They would recall their formative elementary years when she was their mentor in visual arts at the Ateneo.

Later on, she became NUT's leading lady in an Ateneo production of the musical, "Oliver," where she sang the soulful "As Long As He Needs Me."

In 1969, I staged "Once Upon a Mattress" for the Sigma Delta Phi sorority in UP. We searched for an alumna to portray the Wicked Queen. Cheloy was recommended by Ofelia Gelvezon-Tequi, and aware of her "Oliver" stint, I quickly agreed to cast her, sight unseen.

Besides, NUT, Celia and Pitoy all said she was a wonderful person to work with. Indeed, Cheloy was a great role model for the student cast that included campus beauties like Nelia Sancho, Marilou Matti and Ester Rimpos.

Boy Camara and Alfie Kwong were some of the Upsilonians who enriched that production's cast. However, it was Cheloy I bonded with, because of her good humor,

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'Philippine Idol' analyzed

By Nestor U. Torre

NOW THAT ABC-5's "PHILIPPINE IDOL" has come up with its first winner in Mau Marcelo, it's time to evaluate the talent search's long process and outcome.

First off, the show should be credited with having discovered some worthy talents, like the three "final-finalists," plus Pow Chavez, Ira Marasigan and Drae Ybañez.

Trouble was, the tilt's viewer-voters could not be relied upon to support the best talents, and some of them were booted out much too early in the competition.

The show's finals at the Araneta Coliseum could have been even more exciting if the likes of Pow and Ira had been involved, don't you think?

Survivors

Yes, they had their own limitations, but it's likely that their final performances wouldn't have been as "safe" as those of the tilt's three actual "penultimate" survivors.

Another positive aspect of the talent search was its relatively high-minded approach in handling new talents. Some other singing tilts resort to rougher and more melodramatic treatment, and we're glad that "Philippine Idol" avoided some of this.

The judging was generally above-board and focused on the contenders' talent rather than on more stickily personal aspects. But, Francis M and Pilita Corrales' comments were sometimes too "motherhood" and "feel-good" to be truly helpful.

For his part, Ryan Cayabyab tried to get down to the nitty-gritty and was thus of greater assistance to the tilt's young contenders. But, as the weeks rolled on, it became clear that he was disappointed in the voters' erratic and erroneous choices.

Is there any way to mitigate this problem next year? Even on "American Idol," the viewer-voters have the final say, so that element appears to be carved in stone.

Rigorous

However, the show's judges can learn from their initial experience by being more rigorous in choosing the tilt's 24 semi-finalists next year.

This can go a long way in limiting voters' room to maneuver in unfairly and injudiciously influencing the competition's voting patterns.

In other words, next year's judges have to make doubly sure that all or most of the 24 semi-finalists they choose are talented enough to emerge as worthy finalists and winners.

This year, there were some relatively weak semi-finalists, some of whom had such strong voter support that they made it to the finals.

The judges' best revenge in 2007 would be to make sure that weak contenders wouldn't even get into the semi-finals. That way, however the voting patterns play out, only the most qualified contenders can get anywhere much.

Unfair influence

Therefore, the judges should feel less like the practically useless entities they sometimes were this year, as some voting "machines" exerted undue and unfair influence on the tilt's weekly outcomes.

This could also mean that the semi-finalist phase of the contest should be made longer, so that the judges can have more time to evaluate each potential semi-finalist in much greater detail.

Finally, the show's technical and entertainment aspects can definitely be improved. There were too many technical glitches this season, and the production's staging was standard and lacked genuine show biz flair and entertainment value.